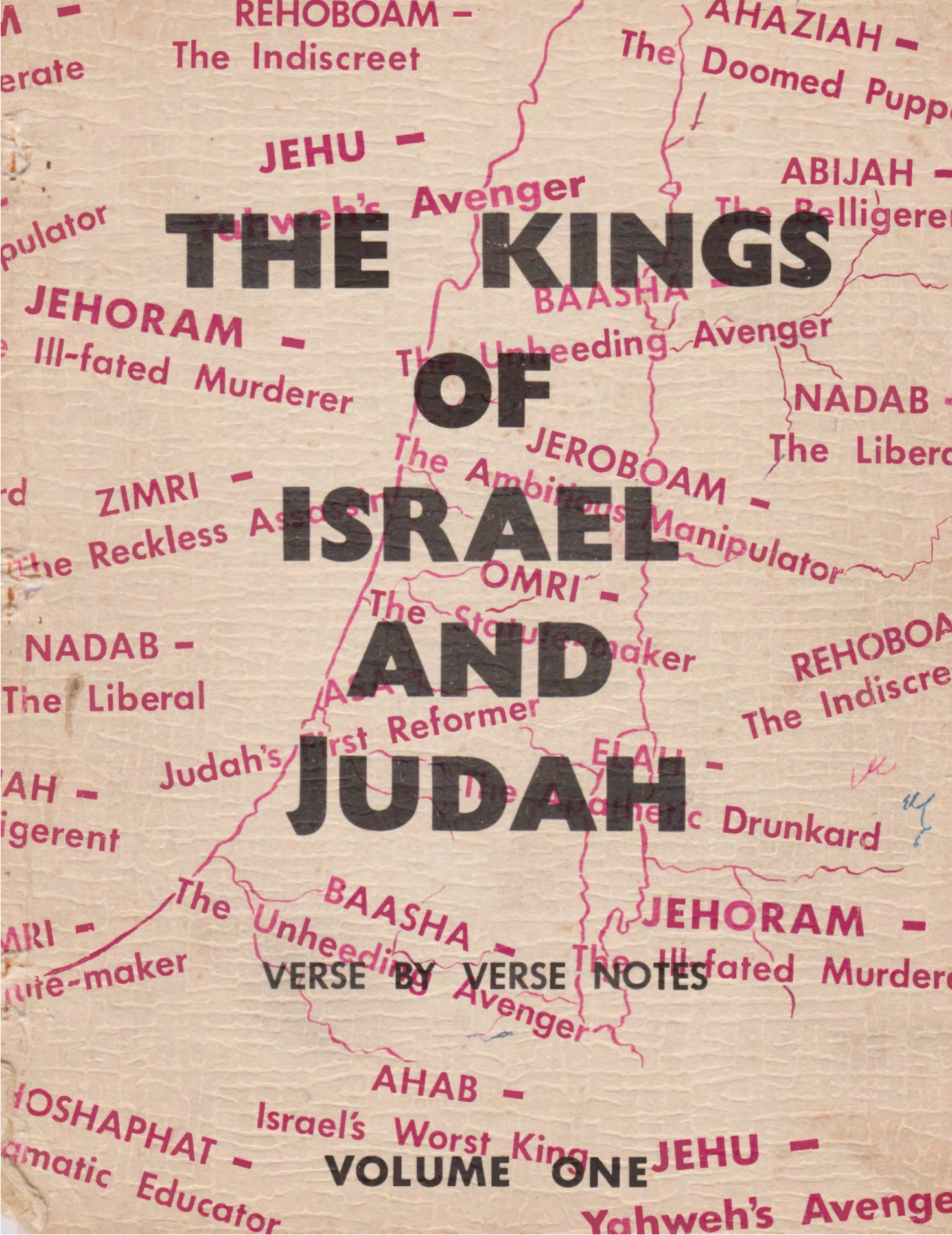


# THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

VOLUME ONE



REHOBOAM -  
The Indiscreet

AHAZIAH -  
The Doomed Pupp

JEHU -  
Yahweh's Avenger

ABIJAH -  
The Belligere

pulator

JEHORAM -  
The Ill-fated Murderer

BAASHA -  
The Unheeding Avenger

NADAB -  
The Libero

ZIMRI -  
The Reckless Assassin

JEROBOAM -  
The Ambitious Manipulator

OMRI -  
The Statute-maker

NADAB -  
The Liberal

REHOBOAM -  
The Indiscreet

AH -  
The Indigent

ASA -  
Judah's First Reformer

ELAH -  
The Apathetic Drunkard

OMRI -  
The Statute-maker

BAASHA -  
The Unheeding Avenger

JEHORAM -  
The Ill-fated Murderer

JOSEPHAT -  
The Dramatic Educator

AHAB -  
Israel's Worst King

JEHU -  
Yahweh's Avenger

# PREFACE

These notes are the product of a Study Class held in Brisbane during 1974 and 1975 upon the theme "The Kings of Israel and Judah." Members of the class undertook the study of the lives and characters of 39 kings who ruled over Israel and Judah from the division of the kingdom of Solomon in 931 BC to the overthrow of Judah in 586 BC.

A great deal of valuable instruction and exhortation was received from a consideration of the affairs of God's ecclesia in this period of its history and these notes are offered to the Brotherhood so that others might share some of the benefits of this study which is aptly suited to the times in which we live.

The life of each king is considered separately in verse by verse form with summaries added throughout. Every attempt has been made however, to retain a measure of synchronisation between contemporary kings as this is the method employed by the Divine chronicler.

The notes span the following sections of scripture :-

- 1 Kings - chapters 12 to 22
- 11 Kings - chapters 1 to 25
- 11 Chron.- chapters 10 to 36

Not all chapters listed receive consideration and those chapters dealing with the lives of Elijah and Elisha have been excluded except where they record events in the lives of the two great prophets that are interwoven with the lives of the kings under consideration. It also follows that where the history of the kings is repeated in almost identical form in the companion record it has been omitted as additional notes would serve no purpose.

In issuing these notes to the Brotherhood in their present form the Publishers are conscious of their limitations but are confident that they will be a helpful source of information for Bible students who undertake a study of the kings of Israel and Judah. A prayerful and careful study of this portion of the Scriptures is a most rewarding exercise and is commended to all.

J.A. Cowie



# INTRODUCTION

## OBJECT OF THE STUDY

The object of the study is to undertake a careful examination of the significant characters presented in the records of Kings and Chronicles and to consider the reasons for their successes and failures; the virtues and the faults of their reigns and the effect each had upon the destiny of their nation. To be able thereby to gain greater insight into human weakness and avoid the many pitfalls which often brought the Kings of Israel and Judah and consequently their kingdoms 'very low'. By far the most important object however is to receive encouragement in the service of our God by examining and endeavouring to follow the examples of the few faithful and obedient among them.

### A STUDY IN LEADERSHIP

This is essentially a study in leadership - a series of character studies of men of responsibility. The lessons for ecclesial leaders and "shepherds of the flock" are many and varied.

### ISRAEL AND JUDAH - GOD'S ECCLESIA

Israel and Judah were the ecclesia of God - 1Chron.29:23, Ex. Ex.19:5-6, Acts.7:38, Jer.3:14&20, Rom.11:1-5. As an ecclesia (though at times apostate) all Israelites stood related to the covenants. Each individual lived a life and developed a character which finally determined his eternal destiny. The lives and characters of the kings are recorded as a warning and exhortation to all subsequent generations of covenant bearers, whose future will be determined upon the same basis.

A divine estimation of each king is inserted in the record of their reigns, whether it was long or short. This is evidence that "The Judge of all the earth", whose "eyes run to and fro through the whole earth" was keenly interested in the ways and the actions of the kings as they led his ecclesia and he made his final and irreversible assessment of them at the end of their reign. (Heb.13:17)

It will be the object of these notes to high-light the lessons to be learnt from the record of the kings of Israel and Judah which were "written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the age are come".

## THE ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF KINGS

Kings and Chronicles are a historical record which is distinctly religious containing severe indictment as well as commendation. The unbiased and direct manner with which the acts of each king are recorded indicates authorship outside of the court of the king. No royal scribe or court historian would record the history of monarchs in such unequivocal and authoritative fashion - not only would it endanger his position but in the case of some kings, his life as well. The records were written by men who though fully acquainted with the details of the lives of the kings were not connected with them in any way that biased or influenced what they wrote. They were concerned with recording God's view of each

king rather than that which each king might have wished to be written of himself.

The prophets undoubtedly were the recorders of the history of this period - neither the royal scribes or the priests could have satisfactorily performed the task they accomplished so well. Note the part played by prophets in the anointing and subsequent accession of kings :-

Samuel - Saul 1Sam.10:1 and David 1Sam.16:12-13

Nathan - Solomon 1Kings.1:11-27,34

Ahijah - Jeroboam 1Kings.11:29-38

Jehu - Doom against Baasha 1Kings.16:1-4,7

Elisha - Jehu 11Kings.9:1-12

The records of prophets being involved with kings usually to condemn them are numerous, but the history of Elijah and Elisha covers 19 chapters from 1Kings 17 to 11Kings 13 - who would have such a complete knowledge but the prophets themselves? Not only this but the similarity of words and phrases and the style is remarkably similar to that found in Isaiah, Jeremiah and the other prophets of this period.

### THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS

(1) The association of many prophets together commenced in the days of Samuel - before his time the only prophets mentioned were Abraham Gen. 20:7, Aaron Ex.7:1, Miriam and Deborah and the unnamed prophet of Jud. 6:8. Moses was also a prophet, Deut.18:15 - but nowhere is it recorded that prophets gathered in groups until the days of Samuel 1Sam.10:5, 10-12. If not the founder Samuel was certainly the first significant leader of the school of the prophets 1Sam.19:20.

(2) Samuel's yearly circuit - Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpeh and return to Ramah, 1Sam.7:15-17, was probably in connection with the schools.

(3) Jezebel murdered groups of prophets - 1Kings.18:4. These were Yahweh's prophets - 1Kings.9:10&14.

(4) There were apparently groups in most cities around Samuel's circuit and its immediate area - 11Kings.2:3&5.

(5) Elisha's dealing with the sons of the prophets were many. He appears to have led them. 11Kings.4:1,38; 6:1-3.

(6) They were manifestly an independent group having their inception before the monarchy and therefore well able to play the part of Divine recorders.

(7) The seers were actually prophets - 1Sam.9:9. The word in the Hebrew is RAAH meaning 'to see'. Samuel was a seer - 1Sam.9:19.

(8) Prophets and seers recorded the history of Kings - 1Chron.29:29; 11Chron.9:29,12:15.

### THE CHRONICLES OF THE KINGS

The phrase "The chronicles of the Kings" is found 30 times in the books of Kings and Chronicles; 12 times concerning the kings of Judah (first mention 1Kings.14:29) and 18 times concerning the kings of Israel (first mention 1Kings.14:19).

It is apparent that these "chronicles" were records kept by God's prophets of the affairs of the ruling monarch of each kingdom and that in due course they were assembled and completed to form the books of Kings and Chronicles as we have them today.



## THE ACTS OF THE KINGS

The word "acts" is used 50 times in the books of Kings and Chronicles, for they are records of the acts or works of men who will be judged according to the same rule that has applied to responsible men of all ages, "Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be". Rev. 22:12

"Works" or fruits reflect what is in the heart; Matt. 7:16-20, Luke 6:43-45 and therefore the final judgement will be upon the basis of what a man has done, whether it be good or evil; 11 Cor. 5:10, Rom. 2:5-16.

It is sobering to reflect upon the fact that as God recorded the "acts" of the kings of Israel and Judah, so he also is recording our "acts" in a special record known amongst us as "a book of the life" as distinct from "The Book of Life". For reference to these personal records of our lives and character, commenced when we attained covenant status by baptism into Christ, see; Ps. 56:8 and Rev. 20:12.

The final assessment of our "acts" will determine whether or not our name is found still recorded in "The Book of Life" by the judge before whom "We must all stand". If in that record there are found sins unrepented of, and therefore unforgiven; works of the flesh and "acts" that testify to "an evil heart of unbelief", then inevitably the Divine condemnation will also be recorded therein, as it was in the case of every wicked or unfaithful king in Israel and Judah. On the other hand, if the Judge finds a record of worthy "acts", being the fruit of a good and righteous heart, works of faith and a character reflecting his own, in a man who consistently repented of his sins and sought forgiveness; confessing his weakness and his utter dependence upon the mercy and the strength of God, then the Divine assessment will be one of commendation as it was in the case of a few kings of Judah.

It remains to be seen if God will reveal the history of our lives to future generations of mortals in the Kingdom age for their "learning and admonition" as he has revealed the lives and characters of the kings to us. One thing is certain however. Very few of the kings, if any, would have realised that the affairs of their lives and their "acts" would be preserved for the scrutiny of all subsequent generations.

Finally, some mention should be made of the important relationship between "acts" and character. Character is a product of faith and obedience which are developed by the influence of the word of God upon the mind and heart. As an individual grows in faith, and obedience to the Divine will he is conformed to the image or pattern of Christ who was a perfect manifestation of his father's character. A man's "acts" are therefore an index to his character, hence Christ's intention to judge a man "according to that which he hath done"; Rom. 2:6, 11 Cor. 5:10.

In this context the following maxim is not without its force:-

Sow an Act - Reap a Habit,  
Sow a Habit - Reap a Character,  
Sow a Character - Reap a Destiny.

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## CHRONOLOGY OF THE KINGS

Chronology is a rewarding study in itself, but its real value lies in the light it throws upon the surrounding text. Studied in conjunction with the text it is a valuable aid to deeper understanding of the Divine record of the Kings.

It is extremely difficult to arrive at an absolutely certain chronological table for this period of Israel's history between 931 BC. and 586 BC. The issue is confused by some contradictory synchronisms and many other difficulties apparently due to interpolation and errors in the transcription of the text and apparently in some cases to differing dating systems employed in Judah and Israel. These difficulties will only be fully appreciated by those who attempt to reconstruct the chronology of the period.

However, much valuable detail is available and enables a reasonable reconstruction to be made though dogmatism in some areas is excluded.

Most authorities now agree that 931 BC. was the year of the division of the kingdom of Solomon and that 723 BC. was the year of Israel's collapse at the hand of Shalmaneser king of Assyria, while 586 BC. is generally agreed to be the year of the dissolution of Judah's commonwealth and the demise of Zedekiah its last king at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

We have adopted the chronological table from the commentary on the 1 and 11 Kings by John Gray which is based upon, but makes significant modifications to the chronological scheme elaborated by Edwin R. Thiele in his work "The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings". There are areas of difficulty in this chronological table as there are in all chronologic tables for this period but it is the most satisfactory reconstruction encountered in a considerable amount of research into the subject by the writer.

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Chronological Table overleaf
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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Death of Solomon 931 B.C.

ISRAEL

Jeroboam 1	931-910
Nadab	910-909
Baasha	909-886
Elah	886-885
Omri (rule disputed)	885-881
(undisputed)	881-874
Ahab	874-853
Ahaziah (co-regent)	855
(sole king)	853-852
Jehoram	852-841
Jehu	841-814
Jehoahaz	813-797
Jehoash (co-regent)	799
(sole king)	796-781
Jeroboam 11 (co-regent)	794
(sole king)	781-754
Zechariah	754-753
Shallum	753
Menahem's rising	753
Menahem established	751-742
Pekahiah	742-741
Pekah	740-732/1
Hoshea	731-723
Fall of Samaria	723-722

JUDAH

Rehoboam	930-914
Abijah	913-911
Asa	911-871
Jehoshaphat	871-847
Jehoram (co-regent)	853
(sole king)	848-841
Ahaziah	841
Athaliah	841-836
Joash	835-796
Amaziah (co-regent)	798
(sole king)	795-767
Azariah (Uzziah) co-regent	791
(sole king)	766-740
Jotham (co-regent)	750
(sole king)	739-734
Ahaz (co-regent)	734
(recognised by Tiglath-pileser)	732
(formal accession)	730
(reign)	730-715
Hezekiah (co-regent)	729
(sole king)	714-686
Manasseh (co-regent)	695
(sole king)	685-641
Amon	640-639
Josiah	639-609
Jehoahaz (3 months)	609
Jehoiakim	608-597
Jehoiachin (3 months)	597
Zedekiah	596-586
Fall of Jerusalem	586



# ISRAEL'S FIRST THREE KINGS

## SAUL, DAVID and SOLOMON

Although the scope of this study does not include Saul, David and Solomon, no study of the kings of Israel and Judah could be complete without some reference to these three kings and the effect of their reigns upon the subsequent history of the kingdom.

The following is a brief summary of their lives and character with special emphasis on the manner in which they influenced the direction of the kingdom's affairs in subsequent years.

## SAUL

Israel's first king was a tragic figure who made a good start but finished life miserably in utter despair and hopelessness having been abandoned by God for his disobedience and rebellion.

The tragic failure of the man chosen by God to be Israel's first king in answer to their plea to Samuel, "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations" is the subject of Divine comment through the prophet Hosea chapter 13:9-11. Yahweh says "I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath." Israel had rejected their heavenly King and desired a visible monarch to lead them into war and judge them after the style of the surrounding nations. This was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Deut.17:14. God therefore in anger gave them a king of the sort that they envisaged and when he had proven himself unworthy by repeated disobedience to specific Divine commandments, removed him "in his wrath".

In Hosea 13:9 the reason for Saul's failure is perhaps hinted at in the words "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself". Saul had no-one else to blame for his failure but himself. He was given every chance to succeed. All that was required of him was obedience, but he was unable to resist the voice of the people on the two occasions that his faith and obedience were tested by God. Following his rejection, he rapidly declined into a state bordering on insanity and characterised by repeated attempts to rid himself of his obvious successor.

Saul's decline is directly attributable to his pride. Following his rejection "from being king" 1 Sam.15:23, he clung to the throne almost as though it was an inherent right, 1 Sam.20:30-31 and refused to recognise his divinely appointed successor. The last years of Saul's life were spent in sorrow and bitterness and the record of Samuel frequently portrays his schizophrenia as he pursued David with murderous intent and then on occasions was moved to protest his love for the man he sought to destroy.

An evil spirit had overtaken Saul as firstly he witnessed David's success in war and his own eclipse in the eyes of the nation. 1 Sam.18:6-9 c/p 1 Sam.8:19-20. And then watched him grow in stature as he "behaved himself wisely" in the affairs of state, 1 Sam.18:12-16. It became obvious to all including Saul that "Yahweh was with David" and this only served to highlight the fact that God had abandoned Saul. The

frequent frustration of his evil designs against David increased Saul's awareness of his isolation from God and finally culminated in his desperate bid to regain contact with the deceased Samuel through the medium of a witch.

The pathetic picture of "the anointed of Yahweh" grovelling at the feet of a woman whose class he had sought to destroy at the commencement of his reign 1 Sam.28:9 reveals the full circle turned by a man who had "rejected the Word of Yahweh" and had become the victim of his own bitterness, hatred and jealousy. How the words of the old prophet must have burned in the mind of Saul as he crawled across the Valley of Jezreel, back to his troops on Mt. Gilboa following his disastrous visit to Endor; "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." 1 Sam.15:22-23.

The sad end of Israel's first king - death by his own hand - was testimony to Hosea's words, "O, Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself". For a man who had destroyed himself by disobedience, rebellion and hatred this was the final act that sealed his eternal destiny.

It is not without significance that the name "Saul" does not appear in the records covering the history of the divided kingdom which constitute the scope of this present study. In fact it appears only once outside of the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles and that is in Isa. 10:29 where incidental reference is made to "Gibea of Saul". It is almost as though the Spirit desired to forget about the man who made such a disastrous job of being Israel's first king. So much did David overshadow Saul that he fades from the record into almost total insignificance. His effect upon the nation was extremely limited and with his death any influence for good or evil which he may have exerted disappeared completely.

While Saul's failure may have had little effect upon Israel's subsequent history, it is interesting to note the curious parallels between Saul and Jeroboam the first king of the northern section of the divided kingdom known as "Israel". Doubtless Jeroboam did not pattern himself after Saul, but in similar circumstances and moved by the same motives his life and character resembles that of Saul in many particulars. Compare the records of 1 Sam.15:17-23 and 1 Kings 11:26-39, 12:25-33, and note that both are Divinely appointed and make a humble start. Both men failed when faced with a dilemma that required faith and turned to their own devices to secure their position and their power, which was threatened by the departure of their subjects. Both were men of pride with an obsession for power, manifesting stubbornness in the face of Divine rebuke. Both were idolators who sacrificed without obedience. In contrast to Saul however the effect of Jeroboam's reign upon the history of Israel was nothing short of catastrophic, for he became known as "Jeroboam the Son of Nebat who made Israel to sin".

Bro.L.G. Sargent summarised Saul in these words, "Bounding the view beyond were the mountains of Gilboa, scene of the defeat of Saul. To a mind filled with the history of Israel, those heights would call up the whole tragedy of the king who became haunted by the knowledge of his own rejection and filled with hatred of the successor whom God had chosen. It was the story of a man who by worldly standards was not irreligious, but who was lacking in the faith which could make the word of God a living reality in his life. Weakness in trust had in him its retribution; the

ground of trust is removed, and as a result rebellion against the Divine judgment finds an outlet in the murderous pursuit of David; and "stubbornness" leads at last to the seeking of consolation in the witchcraft which stands in antithesis to the God who has forsaken him." (Teaching of the Master, page 15.)

## DAVID

Without any doubt "the Beloved" is the greatest figure in the period of Israel's history from the judges to the times of Christ. In the records of the kings he is represented as a monumental figure who stood before Israel as Christ before the Ecclesia.

His name is mentioned 70 times in the record under study, most frequently in the context of a comparison between his reign and that of his successors. He is set forth as the prime example of what Yahweh desired in a king and consequently his character and reign became the standard by which all other kings were assessed. E.g., 1 Kings 14:8,15:3-5.

Much could be said concerning this great man but we will limit this consideration to a brief review of his character.

David possessed what Saul lacked - the desire to obey God's appointments and submit to his will whatever the cost to himself. With David it was an inflexible rule that the Divine will always came before other considerations and because of this readiness to obey, God saw him as "a man after his own heart." Acts 13:21-22. David's character had been formed early in life by his work as shepherd of his father's flock, an experience that had taught him many lessons, not the least of which was implicit trust in God's strength and providence, Psalms 23. The leading and tending of his father's flock was also a perfect training ground for a man who was to lead the nation whom Yahweh "the Shepherd of Israel" called the "sheep of his pasture", Psalms 80:1,79:13.

David developed great skill as a shepherd and this prepared him well for the greater work of re-uniting, leading and feeding God's flock who were in complete disarray and confusion after Saul's death. As the Psalmist records "He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes great with young He brought him to feed Jacob His people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands." Psalms 78:70-72.

It is an interesting exercise to compare and contrast the anointing of Saul with that of David. Samuel found David diligently keeping his father's flock in Bethlehem, 1 Sam. 16:11; but he found Saul wandering aimlessly in a vain search for his father's lost asses. 1 Sam. 9:1-10. These incidents serve to characterise the subsequent reigns of Saul and David. One man who was never in control of the people he ruled, allowing them to rebel against "the commandments of Yahweh"; the other skilfully guiding and uniting the flock of God and bringing the nation of Israel to unprecedented heights of glory.

Some idea of the enormous impact of David's life and reign upon the history of Israel is obtained by a consideration of the fact that many times Yahweh would have destroyed the nation of Judah and their king for their apostasy and evil idolatry but did not do so



because of the "sure mercies of David", the covenant which he had made with him in 2 Sam.7 that "David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem." 1 Kings 11:36, 15:4, 11 Kings 8:19.

Bro. L.G. Sargent writes, "In beautiful contrast to Saul was the forefather of the Lord, whose faith was as true as a sheep's in its shepherd, and who, in spite of one great sin, remained in his contrition 'the man after God's own heart'. David is the most profoundly God-conscious man in the Old Testament." (Teaching of the Master, page 15)

## SOLOMON

The accession to the throne of Solomon the son of David was different in every way to that of his father and tragically for the nation the impact of his reign upon the subsequent history of Israel was also vastly different. David's legacy to the nation has already been referred to in the summary of his life and character. By contrast Solomon's legacy to the nation was the introduction of a corruption that finally brought about its dissolution.

Solomon has the unenviable distinction of being the first king to introduce idolatry into Israel and is the man held solely responsible for the division of the kingdom - God's ecclesia. Whereas David unified and established the kingdom, Solomon corrupted and divided it. 1 Kings 11:11

A review of Solomon's life reveals some great achievements and some sad failures which are made all the more tragic because he had such a unique beginning and such wonderful circumstances and opportunities for success. We will only attempt to briefly review his achievements and failures.

The early part of his reign is marked by achievements and success which made him the greatest king of his time, 1 Kings 10:23. Never again did Israel reach to the heights of glory attained in Solomon's early years. He was known world-wide for his unsurpassed wisdom 1 Kings 10:24 and for his many writings 1 Kings 4:32. The magnificence and splendour of the temple completed in his seventh year made Israel the centre of universal attention and wonder. Furthermore his early years were characterised by absolute peace and prosperity for Israel and the total unification of the people as they basked in the benefits derived from his greatness, prosperity and universal acclaim. In all of these things Solomon was an ample type of the Lord Jesus Christ in that time when he shall sit upon the throne of David ruling over the humbled nations in righteousness and peace, and presiding over the worship of his father in "the house of prayer for all nations."

Solomon's failure was copybook, for in every particular of the demands made of a king under the Law (Deut.17:14-20) he failed. He was unheeding of the warning not to return to Egypt to acquire horses and sent his servants to buy horses and much else as well, 1 Kings 10:28-29. He was unmindful of the commandment not to multiply wives to himself, and "loved many strange women". 1 Kings 11:1-2, Neh.13:26. Furthermore he amassed enormous wealth so that silver became of no more value in Jerusalem than stones. 1 Kings 10:27.

Every king was commanded to concentrate his mind upon the Law of Yahweh and write out his own copy of that law. Deut.17:18-20. Solomon however diversified his education and God gave him wisdom in all matters

in which he sought out knowledge, according to his promise 1 Kings 4: 29-31. Solomon became an oracle in all the philosophies and wisdom of his time excelling all the great men of the east. There was in this an insidious danger which soon manifested itself.

Solomon's mind was occupied with matters that cannot be ascertained by searching. The origins of earth's creator, the reasons behind the established order of nature and the purpose of human existence, (all matters of faith to men like David) vexed a philosophic mind and resulted in Solomon embarking upon a quest of experimentation with every lust and whim of the flesh. Ecc.1:17,2:1-11. Never before or since has there been a man as full as Solomon and as a consequence able to fulfil every desire of the flesh. He did so and concluded that it was all "vanity and vexation of spirit".

It was inevitable that under these circumstances apostasy would result, and in due course "his wives turned away his heart", and he served the gods of the surrounding nations, introducing a corrupt form of worship into Israel which remained for 350 years until the days of Josiah when it was finally eradicated completely, 1 Kings 11:7.

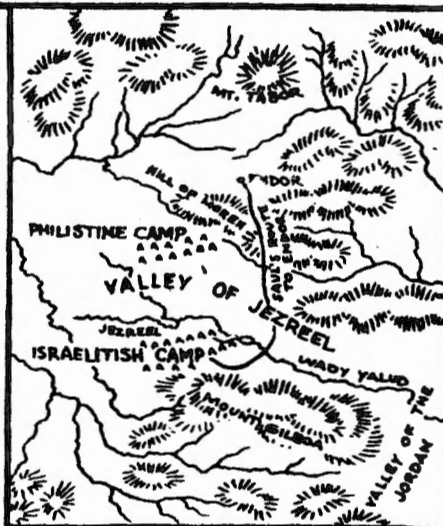
Yahweh was enraged by Solomon's apostasy because it came about despite two unique appearances to him, warning him against "going after other gods." 1 Kings 11:9-10

Finally, God once again appeared to Solomon to inform him that the kingdom would be rent from him except for the tribe of Judah (for David's sake), and that he would be held solely responsible. 1 Kings 11:11-13. For the phrase, "Forasmuch as this is done of thee", Young's Literal Translation has, "Forasmuch as this is with thee", which is clearly a subtle reference to the very Law which Solomon had ignored. In the Law of the King (Deut. 17:14-20) which Solomon had broken in every particular, the king was instructed to copy out the book of the Law, to which is then added the words, "and it shall be with him", verse 19, that he may daily ponder its message and remember its demands upon him. Instead of finding this Law with Solomon Yahweh found Idolatry and rebellion against the provisions of the law governing the kings.

The last words of Solomon reveal that he eventually came to a full realisation of his disregard for the Law of the King, for he uses the language of Deut. 17:14-20 and quotes directly from it in Ecc. 12:8-14, saying "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole (or complete) man".

### Saul's last battle

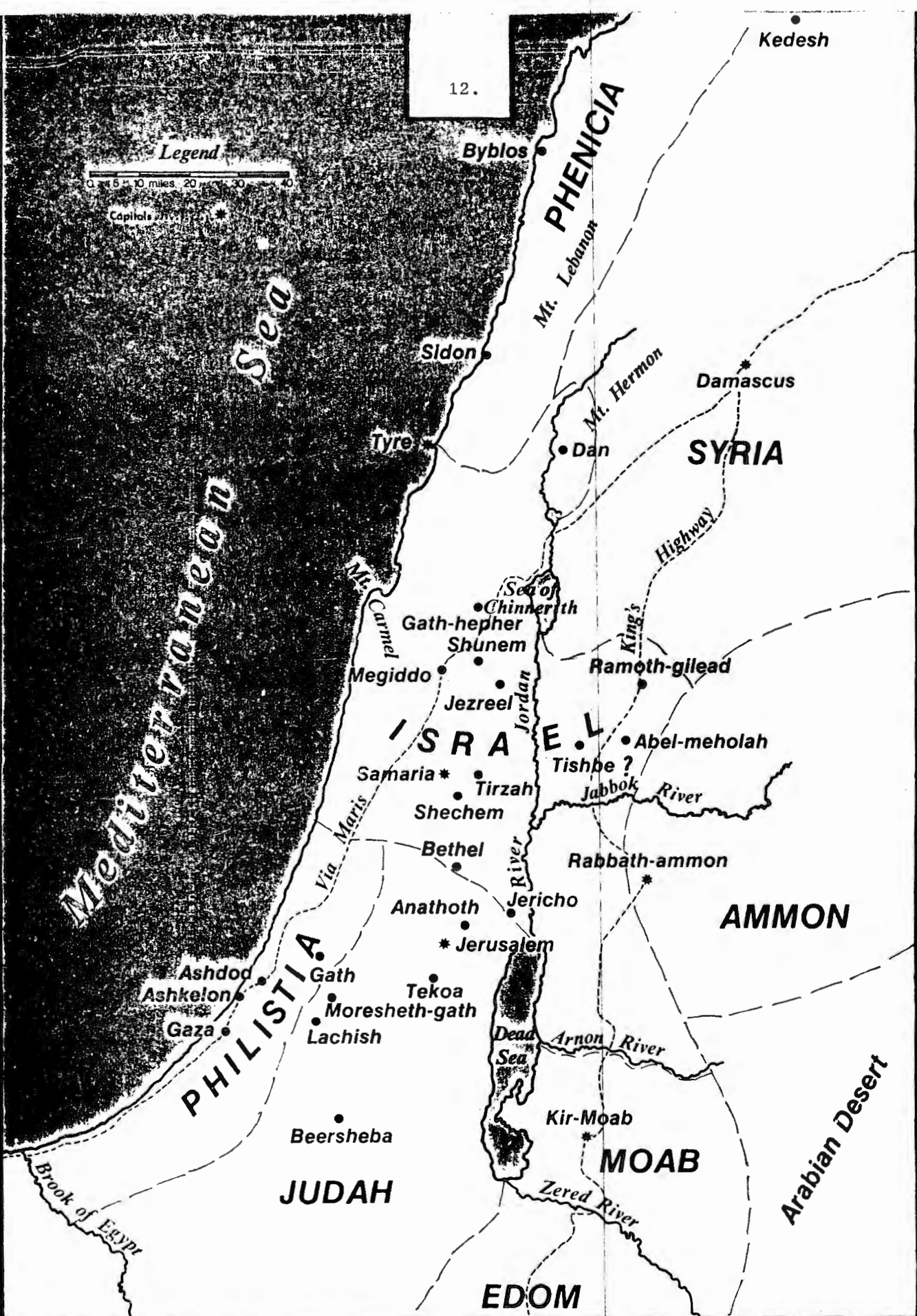
"Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."



## Legend

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Capitals





## REHOBAM - The Indiscreet (JUDAH)

HEBREW - RECHABAM from a Prim. Root RECHAB, to broaden and AM, a people. Hence sig. "a people has enlarged." (Oxford - "Who has enlarged a people")

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 11:43

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 13:7

AGE AT ACCESSION - 41

AT DEATH - 58

LENGTH OF REIGN - 17 years from B.C. 930-914

MOTHER - NAAMAH an Ammonitess. 1 Kings 14:21, 11 Chron. 12:13. Her name means "pleasantness". (cp. her namesake Gen. 4:22) The fact that Rehoboam's mother was an Ammonitess is twice emphasised and appears to be an allusion to Deut. 23:3 and a hint to one of the factors contributing to his apostasy.

CONTEMPORARY KING - Jeroboam B.C. 931-910

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The epithet "Rehoboam - the Indiscreet" points to the leading characteristic of the son of Solomon who presided over the division of the Kingdom. 1 Kings 11:12 He was born one year before Solomon ascended the throne and grew up knowing nothing but the prosperity, peace and opulence of his father's reign. This fact undoubtedly contributed to his lack of character development, his indiscretion and his lack of sympathy for the common people.

When at the age of 41 the crucial moment arrived and confirmation of his sovereignty over the whole Kingdom depended upon a correct reading of the temper of the people and a wise decision to ameliorate their conditions of service, he manifested all the characteristics of a man who had been brought up as a spoilt child, living in the lap of luxury and ease, growing up a stranger to hardship and work, and believing his position and status in life to be an inherent and inalienable right.

Rehoboam's inexperience and complete lack of political finesse and discretion stood in sharp contrast to the political acumen and cunning of Jeroboam the champion of the common people. He was simply no match for the experienced and campaign hardened Jeroboam. God had clearly foreseen that Rehoboam by his own folly and greed would bring about a set of circumstances resulting in the division of the Kingdom. 1 Kings 11:11-13, 35-36

During his reign Rehoboam encouraged the growth of his father's idolatry and heathen abominations flourished in Jerusalem and Judah. Even the lascivious worship of Ashtoreth was allowed to exist by the side of the worship of Yahweh and the worst immoralities were tolerated. 1 Kings 14:22-24. Two basic reasons for his idolatry may be suggested. Firstly his mother was an Ammonitess (a "strange woman" whom Solomon had married even before he ascended the throne) and this is twice emphasised. 1 Kings 14:21& 31. Her influence upon Solomon and the young Rehoboam was corrupting. 1 Kings 11:5. Secondly, the example of his father had a telling effect upon him. It was Solomon who had taught him to "train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it", (Prov.22:6) yet Solomon turned to idolatry setting his son an example which he was quick to follow.

The only wisdom manifested by Rehoboam during his reign was the thoughtful manner in which he dispersed his family throughout the cities of Judah and trained his sons in the affairs of state. 11 Chron. 11:18-23. This reveals that he had learnt something from the disastrous events at Shechem.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF REHOBAM'S REIGN

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Began to reign aged 41	11:43	9:31
Journey to Shechem for coronation	12:1	10:1
Jeroboam leads a delegation to him	12:2-5	10:2-5
The counsel of the old and the young	12:6-11	10:6-11
Rehoboam's foolish reply to people	12:12-15	10:12-15
The revolt of the ten tribes	12:16-17	10:16-17
Adoram stoned - Rehoboam flees	12:18-19	10:18-19
Retaliation prevented by Shemaiah	12:21-24	11:1-4
Fenced cities of Judah fortified		11:5-12
Levites migrate from Northern Kingdom		11:13-17
Rehoboam's family - wisely ordered		11:18-23
His idolatry & Judah's apostasy	14:22-24	12:1
Invasion of Shishak king of Egypt	14:25-28	12:2-12
Final summary and Obituary	14:29-31	12:13-16

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### JOURNEY TO SHECHEM FOR CORONATION 1 Kings 12:1-5

V.1 - "Rehoboam went to Shechem" - Shechem, "the shoulder" (to shoulder a burden) Taking into account the meaning of the names Rehoboam and Shechem this phrase may be paraphrased - "He who will enlarge a people came to shoulder a burden". This was his intention but he proved unequal to the task. Note Abijah's assessment of his father at this crisis - 11 Chron. 13:7. Shechem was perhaps the most historically significant place in the entire land and the natural centre of the northern tribes.

The history of Shechem :- The first promise in the land  
 and Abraham's altar Gen. 12:6-7  
 Jacob hides idols beneath the oak Gen. 35:4  
 A city of refuge Josh. 20:7  
 A city of the Levites Josh. 21:21  
 Blessings & cursings of the Law Josh. 8:30-35  
 Joshua's final exhortation Josh. 24:1

The coronation being in Shechem and not in Jerusalem probably indicates the re-emergence of tribal difficulties and rivalries which had existed in the early part of David's reign and as late as Sheba's revolt; 2 Sam. 20:1. Rehoboam may have been forced in this delicate situation to fall in with this arrangement. The burdens of Solomon's reign and his idolatry must have placed strains on the unity of the tribes.

Shechem was the city chosen by Jeroboam as the capital of the new northern kingdom of Israel; 1 Kings 12:25. The record indicates that all Israel intended to confirm Rehoboam as king despite the prophecy of Ahijah; 1 Kings 11:29-40. Doubtless this prophecy was known and the time was opportune for the people to press for lighter burdens than had been endured under Solomon.

V.2 - "Jeroboam the son of Nebat" - Introduced in the record in 1 Kings 11:26. The rival for the throne according to the prophecy of Ahijah. He returned from Egypt upon the death of Solomon, indicating by inference that whereas Solomon was considered a strong king, Rehoboam was considered weak and vulnerable.

V.3 - "They sent and called him" - The tribes viewed Jeroboam as their leader already - he led their delegation.

V.4 - "Thy father made our yoke grievous" - The "yoke" - OL was not absolutely resented by Israel. They had willingly entered into their situation as servants of the king, in the days of Samuel; 1 Sam. 8:10-20. It was the severity of the yoke that troubled them - they wanted some alleviation and concessions; rebate on taxes, alleviation of the corvee (tribute). They had every intention of serving Rehoboam should he grant concessions.

V.5 - "Depart ye yet for three days" - He seeks time for consultation. A most unwise decision, for it allowed Jeroboam and his supporters to ferment revolt. They needed time and Rehoboam gave it to them.

#### THE COUNSEL OF THE OLD AND THE YOUNG 1 Kings 12:6-11

V.6 - "Rehoboam consulted with the old men" - These were the ZEQENIM - old men or elders (indicates both age and status). They had been advisors and counsellors for Solomon. At least Rehoboam had the sense to consult the wise old men first but that is where it ended. The same Hebrew word YAATS for "consulted" and "advise".

V.7 - "If thou wilt be a servant" - EBED - a servant from the prim. root ABAD used for "servants" in this verse. A play on words - the old men counsel Rehoboam to become the people's servant in order to guarantee their service to him. The principle is that of Luke 22:26 upon which Brother Roberts comments, "If any man desire to be distinguished above others, the way to achieve his desire is to make himself the general servant and promoter of the well-being of others by which he becomes indispensable to all, and therefore the first of all" (Naz. Rev. Pg.322). "and speak good words to them" - TOBOT - good things. 11 Chron. 10:7 adds "and please them" ie. gratify them.



V.8 - "he forsook the counsel of the old men" - "forsook" is AZAB - Prim. Rt. to loosen, ie. relinquish. Roth. - "declined". The words of the old men were not simply ignored by Rehoboam, he rejected them.

"grown up with him" - GADAL, Prim. Rt. - to twist, ie. to be large, hence to grow up. These were his peers - men of a similar background to Rehoboam and seemingly endowed with less wisdom.

"young men" - YELADIM - lads or young men; used perhaps derogatorily.

"which stood before him" - The counsellors of Solomon were evidently not the official advisors of Rehoboam. He had chosen his contemporaries as his counsellors.

V.10 - "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins" - This is graphic hyperbole; used for emphasis. Their counsel was clear - no appeasement, no concessions.

V.11 - "scorpions" - A sadistic elaboration of the lash. The lashes were loaded with leather bags stuffed with sand with spikes mounted, thus inflicting terrible lacerations on the victim.

#### REHOBAM'S FOOLISH REPLY TO THE PEOPLE - 1 Kings 12:12-15

V.12 - "Jeroboam and all the people" - Jeroboam was at the forefront of the people. He was their natural leader, as well as their divinely appointed leader.

V.13 - "roughly" - QASHEH - severe. Same word verse 4 "grievous".

V.15 - "the cause was from Yahweh" - Roth. - "for there had come about a turn from Yahweh". Here "cause" is CIBBAH - a (providential) turn (of affairs). In 11 Chron. 10:15 "cause" is NECIBBAH - an environment, ie. circumstance or turn of affairs.

#### THE REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES - 1 Kings 12:16-19

V.16 - "What portion have we in David" - In verse 11 Rehoboam's reply was couched in poetical terms with a rhyme. Now the people reply in a similar manner. Israel's words are substantially those of Sheba when he revolted against David, 11 Sam. 20:1. This suggests an undercurrent of opposition not removed by David or Solomon. Division does not occur overnight, it requires time to develop under the surface first.

V.18 - "Rehoboam sent Adoram who was over the tribute" - Adoram, also called Adoniram, "Lord of height". From ADON - lord or ruler, and RUWM - to be high, to rise or raise. See 11 Sam. 20:24, 1 Kings 4:6, 5:14. He had been over the tribute in the latter part of David's reign, through all of Solomon's, and now Rehoboam's. He was old, extremely powerful and had doubtless possessed tremendous influence under Solomon. For these reasons Rehoboam considered him to be the right ambassador of peace. The word "tribute" - MIC - A burden, ie. tax in the form of labour. 1 Kings 5:13-14. Adoram was therefore the Minister for Labour and also Commissioner for Taxation.

Sending out this man was a foolish move by Rehoboam - Adoram was the very man Israel held responsible for the severity of their burdens under Solomon.

"Rehoboam made speed"- AMATS - to be alert, i.e. he quickly rallied himself to appreciate the gravity of the situation.

V.19 - "Israel rebelled"- PASHA - "to break away".

### REHOBAM RESTRAINED FROM WAR - 1 Kings 12:21-24

V.21 - "He assembled all the house of Judah"- Rehoboam plans war to regain the kingdom - from Judah and Benjamin he assembled 180,000 men.

V.22 - "Shemaiah, the man of God" - Shemaiah means "Yah has heard".

V.24 - "They hearkened therefore to the word of Yahweh"- Shemaiah's prophecy is accepted by Rehoboam and the people disperse. Despite this a continual state of war existed between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. 1 Kings 14:30, 11 Chron. 12:15.

### JUDAH FORTIFIED - THE LEVITES MIGRATE - 11 Chron. 11:5-17

Vv.5-12 Following the dispersal of his army, Rehoboam set about fortifying his kingdom with fenced cities containing strong armouries.

V.13 - "priests and Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him"- "Resorted" is YATSAB - to place (anything so as to stay). Roth. - "Took their stand with him". This was due no doubt to the apostasy of Jeroboam and his choice of priests outside the tribe of Levi (ie. the family of Aaron). 1 Kings 12:31. See the next verse.

Vv. 16-17 The defection of the Levites and outraged Israelites swelled the ranks of Judah and greatly strengthened Rehoboam's kingdom. Judah maintained a degree of integrity before God for 3 years.

### REHOBAM'S FAMILY - 11 Chron. 11:18-23

V.18 - "Mahalath"- Heb. "sickness". She was the daughter of Jerimoth - "elevations".

"Abihail"- Heb. "Father of might". The daughter of Eliab - "God (El) is his father".

V.19 - "Jeush"- Heb. "to whom God hastens".

"Shamariah"- Heb. "whom Yahweh guards".

"Zaham"- Heb. "loathing".

V.20 - "Maachah"- Heb. "depression". The daughter of Absalom - "Father of peace". Her children were Abijah ("His father is Yah"), Attai ("opportune") Ziza ("abundance"), Shelimoth ("peacefulness").

V.21 - "Rehoboam loved Maachah"- He loved Maachah, Absalom's daughter above all his wives - he had 18 wives and 60 concubines. The three wives named are all connected with the family of David. It is not without significance that Maachah later turned to an abominable idolatry and was evicted from a prominent position by Asa. 1 kings 15:13.

V.22 - "the chief, to be ruler" - "chief" - ROSH - the head. "Ruler" - NAGID - a commander. Abijah was being prepared for the throne.

V.23 - "he dealt wisely"- BIYN - to separate mentally, ie. to understand. Rehoboam was not a complete fool. When it came to preservation of his own interests he was quite adept.

"he desired many wives"- In defiance of Deut. 17:17 and in despite of his father's example of failure - in fact he was the son of an Ammonitess, one of the strange women taken by Solomon.

### REHOBOAM'S APOSTASY - 11 Chron. 12:1-12, 1 Kings 14:22-24

11 Chron. 12:1 - "and had strengthened himself"- Rehoboam's kingdom was strong and in his self-confidence he forsook Yahweh by ignoring and rejecting His law. Note that the record then says, "and all Israel with him". This is an obvious reference to the fact that Rehoboam's kingdom had been greatly strengthened by many from Israel in the north. 11 Chron. 11:16-17.

1 Kings 14:22-24 - V.22 - "Judah did evil in the sight of Yahweh"- A very common statement in Kings. It reveals however that Yahweh was vitally concerned with his people and watched them and the land. Prov. 15:3, Deut. 11:12. Yahweh is equally concerned with the ecclesia today. "provoked him to jealousy"- QANA - to be zealous. The word also relates to the jealousy of a husband for his wife and is used in the Law of Jealousy. Judah had broken the first two commandments. Ex.20:3-5.

V.23 - "they also built them high places"- "high" - GABOWAHH - elevated, powerful, arrogant; from prim. root to soar, to be lofty. The high places had their origin in Canaanitish and Moabitish idolatry. High ground was selected to give prominence to whatever god was being worshipped. High places were the home of fertility cults and were nearly always associated with Asherim and Asheroth (male and female)..The symbols of the cults were deified by the use of pillars, poles and other means. Officiating at these places were "priests" - KEDESHIM (male prostitutes) and KEDESHOTH (female prostitutes) who offered themselves in the worship of their deities. Hos. 4:12-14. Israel were commanded to destroy the high places - Num.33:52, Deut. 33:29. Solomon was responsible for reintroducing the high places - 1 Kings 11:4-8. "images and groves"- "images"- MATSTSEBAH - a column or stone pillar, with grossly immoral connotations. "Groves"- ASHERAH - from a root; to be straight.

V.24 - "Sodomites"- QADESH - a sacred person; a male devotee by prostitution to licentious idolatry. Judah was now no different to the people they had displaced from the land.

### SHISHAK'S INVASION - 1 Kings 14:25-28, 11 Chron. 12:2-12

#### SHEMAIAH'S PROPHECY - 11 Chron. 12:5-8

V.6 - "humbled themselves"- KANA - to bend the knee, humiliate. The king was humbled and declared Yahweh's righteousness, consequently in verses 7 & 8 the intended punishment is mitigated - Rehoboam would be a vassal of Shishak - this was in accordance with the Divine principles relating to mercy and forgiveness. Cp. 1 Kings 21:29

1 Kings 14:26-28, 11 Chron. 12:9-11

Shishak took all the gold in Jerusalem - including the famous shield's of Solomon. Rehoboam replaced them with shields of brass. This was emblematic that tried and precious faith (gold) had disappeared from Judah and that the flesh (brass) was in control.

11 Chron. 12:10-12 - V.10 - "guard"- RASIM + Lit. runners, ie. professional soldiers of the kings bodyguard.

V.11 - "when the king entered into the house of Yahweh"- The shields were evidently used for ceremonial purposes; transported to and from the kings palace when he went to the Temple. It is significant that "brass" (flesh) always accompanied Rehoboam to worship. Shield's were figurative of (1) God's protection - Gen. 15:1, Deut. 33:29; (2) of salvation - 11 Sam. 22:36 Ps. 18:35, but neither of these applied to Rehoboam.

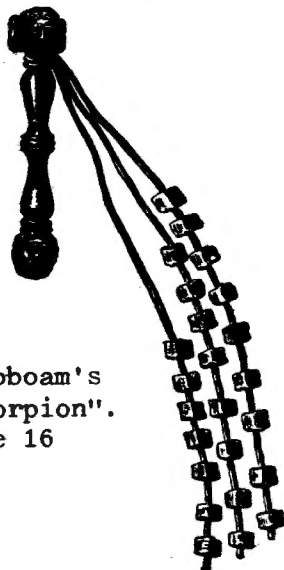
V.12 - "and also in Judah things went well"- Roth. - "Moreover also in Judah there were some good things." Implying that there was nothing good in Israel.

### FINAL SUMMARY AND OBITUARY 11 Chron. 12:13-16 (1 Kings 14:29-31)

V.13 - "his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess"- The repetition of this fact reveals that it was an important contributor to Rehoboam's failure.

V.14 - "he prepared not his heart to seek Yahweh"- Roth.- "But he did evil - in that he did not fix his heart to seek Yahweh". The word "prepared" is KUWN - a prim. rt; to be erect, hence to set up, establish or fix. See the same word in relation to Jehoshaphat, 11 Chron. 19:3, Jotham, 27:6 and Ezra, Ezra 7:10.

v.15 - "there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days"- An implacable hatred existed between the rival kings. The wounds of division were not healed and a state of war existed throughout their reigns.



Rehoboam's  
"scorpion".  
Page 16

FLAGELLUM OR SCOURGE.



Head of Shishak  
(From temple of Karnak.)  
Pages 18 & 19



# JEROBOAM - The Ambitious Manipulator (ISRAEL)

HEBREW - YAROBAM - "The people will contend." From a prim. root RUWB; to toss, ie. grapple; fig. to wrangle or hold a controversy, and AM - a people (as a congregated unit).

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 11:26

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 13:20

LENGTH OF REIGN - 22 years 1 Kings 14:20

From B.C. 931-910

ORIGINS - 1 Kings 11:26

FATHER - Nebat - "Regard", from root, to scan, ie. look intently at. By imp. to regard with pleasure. The phrase "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat" occurs 21 times.

MOTHER - Zeruah - "Leprous" from prim. root, to be stricken with leprosy.

PLACE OF BIRTH - Zereda - "to pierce or puncture".

TRIBE - An Ephrathite - ie. an Ephraimite as Zereda is in Mt. Ephraim. See 1 Kings 11:28

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Rehoboam B.C. 931-914, Abijah B.C. 913-911, Asa B.C. 911-871.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The first king of the northern kingdom of Israel left an indelible mark on the history of God's Ecclesia - he became known as "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin", (this Divine epitaph is found 21 times in the record of Kings and Chron.). Few men have been given the opportunities presented to Jeroboam and few men have so blatantly abused them as he did. He was chosen by God as a man with the potential to lead Israel away from the idolatry of Solomon, back to the faithfulness of David's reign. 1 Kings 11:31-39

He must have possessed great potential to develop after David's pattern, for God promised him "a sure house" long before he became king, 1 Kings 11:38. No other king could claim such promises as were made to Jeroboam before his accession. However, the promises were conditional upon faith and obedience and these qualities were soon to be put to the test, and sadly for Israel, Jeroboam was found wanting.

The first indication of the ambition that was to destroy Jeroboam appears in 1 Kings 11:40; "Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam." Why? Who told Solomon that Jeroboam was to be his successor? We know that only Ahijah and Jeroboam knew God's intentions - 1 Kings 11:29 ("they two were alone"). The record is explicit on this point however; 1 Kings 11:26 says Jeroboam preempted the Divine timetable for the

transition of power. He did not take God at His word and failed to wait for the death of Solomon. 1 Kings 11:34-35

Ambition had proved stronger than faith and soon blinded him altogether. Indiscretion quickly followed as Jeroboam fled into Egypt to escape Solomon, and became familiar with the gods of that country, and in particular with Apis (the young bull). Unquestionably the apostasy of Jeroboam in introducing the worship of the golden calves into Israel can be traced to his experiences in Egypt. Upon the death of Solomon he quickly returned to Israel, anticipating the fulfilment of Ahijah's prophecy. Jeroboam was an industrious and capable man, endowed with the ability to lead men - 1 Kings 11:26-28. Despite his long absence he immediately assumed the role of negotiator for the discontented amongst the Ten Tribes, and from this position as leader of an influential minority he rapidly advanced to become the champion of the people, and their popular choice as king.

This rapid progress speaks volumes concerning Jeroboam's character. He was a persuasive individual; a natural leader with an irresistible personality that captivated the hearts of a work-worn, sorely burdened people who were looking for someone to espouse their cause and argue it, before the king-elect. He was in every sense "the peoples man", a socialist who contended for the people (see the meaning of his name), but who also had an eye for the achievement of strong personal ambitions.

The apostasy of Jeroboam demonstrates a complete absence of faith, and is directly attributable to his ambition to retain power over his subjects. His idolatry, tampering with Divine appointments and attempted blackmail of the man of God from Judah, all resulted from this singular motive. He has gone down in history as the man who initiated a religious system in Israel that finally destroyed it. 11 Kings 17:21-23

There are some remarkable comparisons between the lives of Saul and Jeroboam - both had humble beginnings and great potential; were Divinely appointed but lacked faith; turned to disobedience and became idolators, stubbornly resisting any attempts to turn them from their evil ways. The problem in the lives of both men was identical; pride and ambition.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF JEROBOAM'S REIGN

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Emerges as champion of Israel	11:26-28	
Ahijah's prophecy and instructions	11:29-39	
Flees from Solomon into Egypt	11:40	
Leads delegation to Rehoboam	12:2-5	10:2-5
The people appoint him as king	12:20	
Jeroboam's apostasy - the golden calves	12:25-33	
Rebuked by the man of God from Judah	13:1-32	
His persistence in idolatry	13:33-34	
Abijah his son falls ill	14:1-4	
Abijah condemns Jeroboams house	14:5-16	
The death of Abijah	14:17-18	
The death of Jeroboam	14:19-20	

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESTHE EMERGENT JEROBOAM 1 Kings 11:26-28

V.26 - "Solomon's servant" - EBED; primarily a servant, but he appears to have had the status of a special officer of the crown: appointed as a supervisor of works.

'Zeruah, a widow woman' - Probably accounts for the industriousness of Jeroboam - he had learnt to accept responsibility and to work hard at an early age, out of necessity.

"lifted up his hand" - "lifted up" is RUWM - to raise high. It would seem that following Ahijah's prophecy Jeroboam anticipated its fulfilment and came out in open opposition to Solomon.

V.27 - "Solomon built Millo" - Heb. "a rampart, ie. the citadel". Millo was a fortification on the north side of the city of David, consisting of a rampart (two walls with earth filled between). This dates Ahijah's prophecy to Jeroboam some time after Solomon's 20th year; 1 Kings 9:10,15, 24. Jeroboam was doubtless among the officers of 1 Kings 9:23 and had probably become Solomon's servant as a result of a levy raised earlier by Adoram; 1 Kings 5:13-16.

V.28 - "mighty man of valour" - "mighty" is GIBBOR - powerful (warrior). "Valour" is CHAYIL - a force; valour or strength. Not necessarily a soldier but as Roth. - "an able man."

"he was industrious" - OSE MELAKAH - "to do" and "deputyship". Roth. - "one to execute a work." As a foreman or overseer Jeroboam was very capable and his dexterity was obvious. He was a natural leader of men.

"ruler over all the charge of Joseph" - "ruler" is PAQAD - to oversee, muster, charge.

"Charge" is CEBEL - a load. His competence was rewarded by a promotion to be overseer of Ephraim and Manasseh's contingent of "public servants" This confirms almost certainly his origins in Ephraim.

AHIJAH'S PROPHECY 1 Kings 11:29-39

Solomon was not the only one to recognise Jeroboam's potential as a leader - Yahweh had also observed and chosen him for a special purpose.

V.29 - "Ahijah the Shilonite" - "Brother (with the idea of a worshipper) of Yah." From Shiloh - "Tranquil". Shiloh was the place where the land was originally divided by lot among the tribes - Josh. 18:1,8-10 (connect verse 31). On Shiloh see - Judges 18:3, 21:19, Ps.78:60, Jer. 7:12-14. Significantly Shiloh was on the route between Bethel and Shechem. Shiloh was where Yahweh had first set His name - Jer. 7:12; this was to be therefore a "new beginning".

"a new garment" - SALMAH - lit. a dress, mantle. Ahijah was wearing the new garment which symbolised the Nation of Israel. Yahweh was thus signifying a new start - the tribes were to be divided (by lot) again, significantly by a prophet from Shiloh. cp. 1 Sam. 15:27-28

"they two were alone" - This means that the knowledge of the prophecy became general through disclosure by either one - it is clear from V.40 that it was through Jeroboam's premature anticipation of acquiring the monarchy.

V.31 - "Take thee ten pieces" - Ahijah's new mantle representing the 12 tribes as one, was divided - Jeroboam was asked to take 10 (ie. he drew lots as it were).

"I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon" - Solomon was warned of this, verses 11-13. He knew one of his servants would be appointed king - which one, he did not know, until Jeroboam "lifted up his hand" against him. Note - the division of the nation into 2 and 10 tribes was based upon an existing natural division, 11 Sam. 19:43.

V.32 - "one tribe" - While two pieces remained, it seems that the royal tribe Judah was the only complete tribe to remain with the house of David. The other was made up of the remnant of Simeon and part but not all of Benjamin. 1 Kings 12:21-23.

"for my servant David's sake" - A testimony to the stature of David in Yahweh's eyes and of His faithfulness to the covenant made to Israel's greatest king. cp. 11 Sam. 7

"Jerusalem's sake" - Yahweh had set His name in Jerusalem - it was to be the centre of Israel's worship after the pattern of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Deut. 12:5-14. This was to be Jeroboam's stumbling-block. Note the similarity of this verse with Deut. 12:14.

V.33 - "forsaken" - AZAB - to loosen; relinquish.

"Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians" - "Ashtoreth" - means "increase" A fertility goddess of Canaan (Attarat) - known in Greek as Astarte, in Babylon as Ishtar. The worship of this deity entailed fertility rites in association with male and female (prostitutes) priests. Note - there is no feminine term for goddess in Hebrew, so a masculine is used. Solomon married some Zidonian women - note also that Jezebel was a Zidonian, 1 Kings 16:31.

"Chemosh, the god of the Moabites" - An astral deity also associated with abominable practises. Num. 25:1-2

"Milcom, the god...of Ammon" - Heb. "a king". Same as Molech, an astral deity related to the Venus-star. Chemosh and Molech are thought to be local names for the same god; worshipped by human sacrifice - 11 Kings 23:10, Lev. 18:21, Jer. 32:35. - established in the valley of the son of Hinnom ("moaning").

V.34 - "for David my servants sake" - Again, the figure and example of David is introduced - his enormous example stood as a constant rebuke to all who failed, after him. Despite Solomon's apostasy the covenant would stand.

"whom I chose" - At once a declaration of the source of David's success and a warning to Jeroboam - he was "chosen" also, whereas Solomon and Rehoboam reigned by accession to the throne of their father.

V.35 - "I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand" - Confirming verse 12 of the earlier prophecy - qualifies verse 31 inasmuch as it indicates that the division would not be during Solomon's lifetime.

V.36 - "light" - NIR - "to glisten"; a lamp or light. Symbol of a living representative of the family.

V.37 - A guarantee of Divine help in securing his kingdom. There was no

need for him to devise methods of retaining his subjects.

"thy soul desireth" - TAAVAH - a longing, by imp. a delight. Roth.- "Thou shalt reign over all that thy soul could desire." This was both a wonderful promise and a severe test of faith. Would Jeroboam have sufficient faith to wait for Yahweh to establish his kingdom?

V.38 - Contrast verse 33. Jeroboam would have to do what Solomon failed to do.

"build thee a sure house" - The reward was great, then, and in the future. This promise (though conditional upon obedience) was virtually the same made to David.

V.39 - Another assurance that Yahweh would establish his kingdom without his intervention - in fact because of Jeroboam's contrivances the opposite occurred, 11 Chron.11:13-16.

### JEROBOAM'S FLIGHT INTO EGYPT 1 Kings 11:40

V.40 - Jeroboam must have disclosed the prophecy. Solomon doubtless, was ready for the appearance of the "usurper", verse 11. This preempting of God's promise and purpose revealed a sad lack of faith in Jeroboam which was to culminate shortly after his accession in an awful apostasy.

"fled into Egypt" - The first commandment for the kings of Israel forbade a return to Egypt, Deut.17:16. This was Solomon's first mistake - 1 Kings 3:1. Jeroboam's flight into Egypt was the beginning of his idolatry.

"Shishak" - Libyan founder of the 22nd Dynasty - 935 to 914 BC. The same king who invaded Judah in Rehoboam's 5th year. 1 Kings 14:25-28. This appears to date Jeroboam's escape into Egypt about 4 years before Solomon's death in 931 BC.

### JEROBOAM'S RETURN 1 Kings 12:2-3,20

V.2 - "heard" - The Vulgate has "heard that Solomon was dead."

"Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt" - The record is at pains to underline this fact, due to the subsequent apostasy of Jeroboam which had strong links with Egyptian deities.

V.20 - "all Israel heard" - Note "all" in contrast to "they" of V.3 which obviously refers to the smaller active group of Israel who were pressing for concessions from Rehoboam.

### JEROBOAM'S APOSTASY 1 Kings 12:25-33

V.25 - "built Shechem" - ie. fortified and strengthened it as a fortress. It was his first capital and the place of his accession as king - it also possessed special significance as the place of Rehoboam's rejection.

"went out from thence and built Penuel" - The name means "the face of El". Note its history - Gen.32:30-31. This was the place where Jacob was taught that success would not come through his own contrivings and he learnt to cast himself entirely upon Yahweh. Hos.12:3-4. Jeroboam may have gone to Penuel to secure the remnants of the tribes in Gilead - Penuel was about 8 miles east of the River Jordan on the River Jabbok.



V.26 - "Jeroboam said in his heart" - Political considerations became uppermost in his mind. He had a divine guarantee that his kingdom would be secured, 1 Kings 11:38, providing he was obedient to the divine commandments. Jeroboam had not learnt the lesson of Jacob's life and went about securing his interests and endeavouring to "fulfil prophecy" by his own methods. All this occurred at Penuel; see note verse 25.

V.27 - "if this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of Yahweh" - He could not see from a human standpoint how his kingdom could be secured, while Jerusalem remained the centre of Israel's worship, Deut.12:5-14. This was an immediate test of faith which came upon him very soon after his accession.

"unto their Lord" - ADON; ruler. Quite a significant revelation of Jeroboam's mind. He was their Adon. Yahweh had said so. 1 Kings 11:35-37. Yet in his heart he unconsciously recognised Rehoboam's sovereignty. This reveals an absence of faith.

V.28 - "took counsel" - ie. with himself - the word is YAATS; to deliberate or resolve.

"two calves of gold" - Following the example of Aaron whose words were identical to Jeroboam's, Ex. 32:4. It would appear that both attempted to represent Yahweh by a visible object, Ps. 106:19-20. Perhaps Jeroboam sought to introduce something akin to the Ark of the Covenant in which the glory of Yahweh dwelt. His object being to distract the attention of his people from the Temple in Jerusalem. The calf was obviously chosen through Egyptian influence, 1 Kings 12:2. Apis, the young bull, was a deity of the Egyptians. While technically, Jeroboam may have thought the first commandment was not broken, in fact it was and the second was blatantly violated by his action; Ex.20:4-5.

"It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem" - The Israelite was commanded to appear before his God three times in a year at Jerusalem - Deut.16:16. Jeroboam's policy was a "writing down" of the Law - Luke 16:1-9. In order to turn his people away from worship in Jerusalem he had to dispense with the Law but unlike Moses who discovering the calf made by Aaron, smashed the tables of stone on which was written the Law in righteous indignation; Jeroboam deliberately set out to diminish the Law in the eyes of the people.

V.29 - "Bethel" - "The house of God". On the southern boundary of his kingdom, 11 miles north of Jerusalem in the territory of Benjamin. It lay in the path of Israelites travelling to Jerusalem along the ridge of the central highlands. This place has a significant history in connection with Abraham and Jacob.

"Dan" - "Judgement". In the extreme north of Israel on the border with the Zidonians. Note the history of its establishment; Judges 18:1-7. It was 75 miles from Shechem over rough and difficult terrain.

V.30 - "this thing became a sin....even unto Dan" - The people forgot Jerusalem and rather than journey towards "the house of God" (Bethel) where a corrupt worship had been installed, chose to journey away from Jerusalem to "judgement" (Dan). Note the history of Dan. The tribe of Dan being concerned about their inheritance, sought to establish it outside their prescribed lot. In doing this they also established a foreign worship to a

graven image and rejected the Aaronic priesthood. Roth.-"And the people went before the one, as far as Dan." Dan was 75 miles from Shechem while Jerusalem was only 30 miles over much easier terrain. This reveals that flesh will go to any lengths and make almost any sacrifice in order to satisfy its own desires, but is remarkably reluctant when confronted with the responsibilities of the Truth.

V.31 - "an house of high places" - Houses or sanctuaries; local shrines on prominent hills. Built by Jeroboam through a desire to simplify worship and divert the attention of the people and to cause them to cease journeys to Jerusalem. In view of 1 Kings 11:7&33 this was a foolish policy - it demonstrates his complete lack of faith and his obsession to retain his power and kingdom.

"made priests of the lowest of the people" - "Lowest" is QATSAH; an extremity, used in the sense that indicates choice from the whole range of his subjects. No special qualifications were necessary. The priests were Israel's educators, Mal. 2:7, and they were mediators between Yahweh and His people. Jeroboam dispensed with the sons of Aaron and the Levites altogether. This had immediate and disastrous effects for his kingdom - 11 Chron. 11:13-16.

V.32 - "ordained a feast in the eighth month" - As a substitute for, and rival to the feast of Tabernacles which commenced on the 15th day of the 7th month. "Tabernacles" or "ingathering" brought to a climax the agricultural year. It was a time of thanksgiving, joyous fellowship and rededication. Dwelling in booths brought home to the Israelite his utter dependence upon Yahweh. It vividly brought to mind the wilderness wanderings of his fathers and the fact that he was but a tenant of God's land and dependent upon His continued goodness. This is another testimony to Jeroboam's infidelity and obsession with power.

"and he offered upon the altar" - A sacrilege. Firstly it was a false worship and secondly it was presided over by a false "priesthood"; chief of which was the king himself.

"sacrificing unto the calves" - Not unto Yahweh whom they presumably represented in Jeroboam's view.

"and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places" - Bethel became the centre of the new cult and the home of its priests. It was strategically placed right in the path of Israelites travelling south to Jerusalem.

V.33 - "which he had devised of his own heart" - "Devised" is BADA; to invent. Roth.-"Devised out of his own heart." Note this verse virtually repeats verse 32. It is a vital connecting link with 1 Kings 13:1, heightening the drama of the sudden appearance of the man of God from Judah, at the very moment that Jeroboam went up to offer upon his altar.

### THE MAN OF GOD FROM JUDAH 1 Kings 13:1-32

V.1 - "And, behold" - The connecting thought - ie. at the same time as Jeroboam went up to offer incense upon his altar the man of God appeared. This was the inauguration ceremony of Jeroboam's own festival, and of his altar at Bethel. Connected with it was his confirmation in the eyes of Israel as their king and spiritual leader. It was important that all things go well at this inauguration of his own system of worship. At the crucial

moment Yahweh intervened to condemn his system of religion.

"by the word of Yahweh" - The man of God with a special mission came "out of Judah". He was to return immediately; therefore by an enactment he demonstrated that Yahweh was out of fellowship with Israel. Jeroboam was offering incense (prayer) - he is immediately answered by Yahweh, but the message is a declaration of his rejection.

"stood by the altar to burn incense" - i.e. he was about to do so - before he could actually offer his form of "prayer", God intervened with His edict against his system of religion.

V.2 - "he cried against the altar" - The prophecy is against the altar, not Jeroboam. The denunciation was of the system of worship established by him - it was utterly abhorrent to Yahweh.

"unto the house of David" - Because of his apostasy the situation was now completely turned from that of 1 Kings 11:39.

"Josiah by name" - Heb. "Founded of Yah". A rebuke in itself - Jeroboam's was not. The prophecy was fulfilled by Josiah 308 years later.

"upon thee shall he offer the priests" - The non-Levitical priesthood was one of the most abhorrent features of Jeroboam's system. Yahweh's choice of the Levites as the priestly tribe had been overridden and ignored; Num. 3:9-10. "Offer" - ZABACH - to slaughter.

"burn incense" - Particularly repugnant was the thought that their prayers could be accepted without the mediators of God's choosing.

"men's bones shall be burnt" - Both living "priests" and dead would be wiped out completely - the whole system would be completely abolished.

V.3 - "sign" - MOPHETH - conspicuousness; a miracle.

"the ashes....shall be poured out" - "Ashes" - DESHEN - the fat. This was the residue of the sacrifices consisting of ashes mingled with the fat. It was holy and was removed from the altar and deposited in a clean place under the Law - Lev. 1:16, 4:12, 6:10.

"Poured out" - SHAPHAH - to spill forth. This not only ceremonially defiled the altar but also negated the sacrifice. Yahweh was thus demonstrating that the fat which was exclusively His as a symbol of the total surrender of the human will and feelings, he refused to accept in this case.

V.4 - "put forth his hand....lay hold on him" - Jeroboam had meddled with the word of God by endeavouring to fulfil God's promises to him by his own methods - now he put forth his hand to bind one who came by "the word of Yahweh", verse 1. Thus he was now attempting to bind the edict of God.

"dried up" - YABESH ; to wither - a paralysis as a result of withering.

"he could not pull it in again to him" - This was the hand that was about to offer incense now rendered useless for priestly ministrations. It was also symbolic of Jeroboam's powerlessness against the word of Yahweh which he so blatantly opposed.

V.5 - "The altar was rent" - While his power is paralysed the word of God is fulfilled before him; defiling his system and rejecting his offering. Under the law physical blemish such as Jeroboam now possessed in his hand disqualified him from priesthood - Lev. 21:17-24.

V.6 - "Intreat now the face of Yahweh thy God" - "Intreat" - CHALAH; intreat or placate. Roth. - "appease". The phrase "the face of God" is virtually Peniel - the place from whence all this had commenced, 1 Kings 12:25-26. His apostasy was conceived in Peniel.

"Thy God" - he did not dare say "my God" after this. This request of Jeroboam is an admission of his worthlessness as an intercessory or mediator which he had presumed to be.

V.7 - "Come home with me" - Youngs Lit.- "Come in with me to the house." ie. into the sanctuary at Bethel, verse 8. This was a blatant attempt to compromise the man of God.

"I will give thee a reward" - Youngs Lit. - "a gift." Roth.- "a present." This was an invitation to fellowship, which as Yahweh's representative the man of God could not accept; verse 8.

V.9 - "charged" - TSAVAH - to enjoin.

"eat no bread or drink water" - ie. enjoy no fellowship.

"nor turn again by the same way thou camest" - The man of God was not to give the impression that he regularly frequented the land ruled by Jeroboam.

V.10 - "So he went another way" - The man of God has thus far fulfilled his commission. He had condemned Jeroboam and his system, but he himself was under an obligation to obey implicitly Yahweh's demands - not to do so would not only be hypocrisy but would considerably weaken God's case against Jeroboam.

## THE MAN OF GOD FROM JUDAH

The story of the man of God from Judah is perhaps the most poignant in the entire scriptures. He is one of the most tragic figures to emerge from the pages of God's word, but one with whom a fellow-feeling is readily attained. The lesson of his life and death is transparently clear to all who are conscious that "in many things we offend all," James 3:1-2. Simply stated, the sin of the man of God from Judah was a hypocrisy that resulted in the diminution of God's word. He was like those who "say and do not", and as a consequence bring ridicule upon the name which they bear.

The man of God from Judah bursts on to the scene at Bethel during the great inaugural ceremonies marking the establishment of Jeroboam's new religious system. Nowhere in the record is he called a prophet though he delivered a prophecy concerning the destiny of Jeroboam's system and heralded the appearance of its destroyer - Josiah. The reason for this is because he was specifically sent from Judah to represent Yahweh in a special way; he was to enact Yahweh's position in relation to Jeroboam's religious system, and declare its doom. He was the divine messenger sent to Jeroboam to reveal that Yahweh had disfellowshipped him for his apostasy. He was not to fellowship Jeroboam by eating and drinking with him, nor was he to give the impression that he often journeyed into Israel, being specifically commanded to "return by another way." In the presence of the idolatrous king, the man of God performed his task well, for he had no sympathy for Jeroboam or his ways, and was able to resist the attempt made by the king to compromise his stand and detract from his prophecies.

When confronted however, by one of his own kind - a man

who shared his antithapy to Jeroboam's idolatry and was so desperate to converse with someone of a similar attitude to himself, that he could lie concerning an angelic visitation - the man of God forgot his original commission and turned back to eat and drink with the old prophet. As they were dining and doubtless avidly discussing matters of mutual interest the Spirit moved the host to condemn his valued guest for disobeying "the mouth of Yahweh". The man of God was the divine representative and should have known that the word of Yahweh changeth not but standeth sure. The deception practised by the old prophet was in essence no different than the attempted blackmail by Jeroboam; certainly its effect on the outcome of his mission was the same, for the man of God died by the hand of Yahweh and was publicly buried in Bethel, an event that would not have gone unnoticed by Jeroboam and probably accounts for the final words of 1 Kings 13; "After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way..." In other words with the death of the man of God, Jeroboam (being the faithless man he was) could feel free to continue his apostasy. As far as he was concerned the prophecies against his system had been negated or at least severely diminished by the compromise and ignominious death of their deliverer.

### THE TRAGIC END OF THE MAN OF GOD 1 Kings 13:11-32

V.11 - "there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel" - Samuel who was instrumental in establishing the school of the prophets travelled yearly the circuit route through Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, 1 Sam.7:16. He had a school in Bethel; one of the remnants of which was this aged prophet. "sons came and told him" - Evidently his sons were present at Jeroboam's festival and witnessed all the proceedings.

V.12 - "What way went he?" - He was motivated by a desire to meet someone of his own persuasion and occupation. He was evidently sympathetic to the man of God's message, verses 29-32.

V.14 - "oak" - ELAH; an oak. cp. Gen. 35:8, ALLOWN - an oak. The man of God was travelling on foot - he was resting and his "guard" was down. He was tired, hungry and thirsty.

V.18 - "I am a prophet" - NABI - He claims the same status as the man of God. He tells a lie concerning an angel appearing to him and negating the revelation given to the man of God. This was sufficient for the man of God to forget his adamant protests to Jeroboam. There are two glaring faults here:-

1. HYPOCRISY - which weakened the case against Jeroboam.
2. Failure to appreciate the irrevocableness of divine commands.

The man of God was proficient in speaking the word and delivering divine edicts, but failed to perform the demands made upon him. He was also too ready to believe something which would counter what were perhaps fairly harsh conditions imposed upon him in the execution of his commission.

V.21 - "disobeyed the mouth of Yahweh" - MARA; to rebel, hence to defy



authority. He had shown a preference for supposed indirect revelation as opposed to direct and personal revelation. He had heard the "mouth of Yahweh" speak.

V.22 - "in the place" - ie. in the very place - Bethel. Not somewhere half-way. He had returned and completely inverted his former declarations. "thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers" - He would meet a violent death and an undistinguished disposal, somewhere distant from his inheritance.

V.24 - "a lion met him" - See similar case - 1 Kings 20:36. The man of God from Judah became an apt symbol of Jeroboam and of Israel. He had set out to obey but under trial turned back from Yahweh, who in turn became a Lion unto him, Hos. 5:14.

V.28 - "nor torn the ass" - A testimony to the divine hand in his death, and a prophecy that Yahweh would similarly destroy the disobedient Jeroboam while temporarily preserving Israel (the Ass).

V.29 - "to mourn" - MISPED; to beat the breast.

V.30 - "he laid his carcass in his own grave" - Evidence of his sincerity. He was not an accomplice of Jeroboam - he sought identification with the man of God, verse 31.

V.32 - "shall surely come to pass" - A reiteration of the prophecy of the man of God and a guarantee of its fulfillment. By identifying himself in this way the old prophet severed any connection with Jeroboam and his ways.

#### JEROBOAM'S STUBBORN RELIGIOUS POLICY 1 Kings 13:33-34

V.33 - "After this thing" - Not even the effect of the visit of the man of God from Judah or the circumstances of his divinely accomplished death, widely attested, verse 25, deterred Jeroboam from his determination to retain his power and influence over the subjects of his kingdom. He had become incorrigible - fixed in his obsession for power - driven blindly by the fear of losing his influence and popularity.

"but made again of the lowest of the people" - Roth.- "but again made from the whole compass of the people." An insight into his policy of liberalness - he encouraged equal opportunities for all to obtain priesthood despite suitability or regard to the law concerning the Aaronic priesthood; see notes chap. 12:31.

"whosoever would" - HEHAPES; lit. "any who would". ie. any volunteers without regard to qualifications.

"he consecrated him" - Lit. in Heb. - "filled his hand." - used of consecration to office - Judges 17:12, Ex. 29:22.

V.34 - "this thing became a sin" - Roth.- "the sin." Heb. CHATA; to miss the mark or fail of one's object.

"to cut it off and destroy it" - Within a few months of his accession his promised "sure house" was doomed. His eternal destruction was assured, through a complete lack of faith and a stubborn disobedience.

AHIJAH'S DENUNCIATION OF JEROBOAM'S HOUSE 1 Kings 14:1-18

V.1 - "Abijah" - "Yahweh his father."

V.2 - "disguise thyself" - Roth. - "feign thyself another." He knew that if it was known that she was connected with him Ahijah would refuse to help. This was characteristic of Jeroboam - did he believe that Yahweh's prophet would not see through the subterfuge? Was this not limiting the Almighty? This had been one of Jeroboam's greatest sins.

"Shiloh" - "Tranquil".

"Ahijah the prophet" - Connect 11:29-31.

V.3 - "take with thee" - A humble present after the pattern of Saul's present to Samuel, 1 Sam.9:7. Note - Ahijah and Samuel were of Shiloh - this is another similarity between Saul and Jeroboam (see "Summary of character"). Hos.13:9-11 suggests that Saul was first king of Israel.

V.4 - "his eyes were set" - Roth. - "his eyes were fixed." Same phrase is used of Eli, 1 Sam.4:15. Man would not have perceived Jeroboam's subterfuge but Yahweh is not blind - he had seen all Jeroboam's idolatry and wickedness and was about to reveal this fact.

V.5 - "the wife of Jeroboam" - She was a symbol of Jeroboam's reign - he had produced a kingdom of hypocrites (the false priests) and its offspring would become sick and die - it was fitting that Ahijah should announce Yahweh's judgement. cp. 1 Kings 11:29

V.6 - "I am sent to thee" - Note the words of this blind prophet - "I am sent unto thee". Demonstrates divine power to unmask hypocrisy - how disarming this was.

V.8 - "thou hast not been as my servant David" - On the contrary his life followed Saul's pattern - not David's.

V.9 - "Evil above all that were before thee" - Including Solomon through whose apostasy he was made king. Solomon had been slowly drawn away by his wives; he had no predilection for false gods nor did he set out with a deliberate policy to corrupt the peoples worship as Jeroboam had done.

"molten images" - MASSEKOT - cast images.

"hast cast me behind thy back" - See Ps. 106:19-21, Ezek. 23:35.

V.10 - "him that pisseth against the wall" - MASTIN BEQIR - lit. all males. R.S.V. - "every male."

"shut up and left in Israel" - ASUR and AZUB - prob. "helpless or hindered" and "abandoned or destitute". A figure of speech indicating "all".

"dung" - GALAL; the dung of animals in the lower level of houses.

V.11 - "shall the dogs eat" - Note the similarity to Ahab's denunciation, 1 Kings 21:21-24. Jeroboam's kingdom and his principles were the embryo of Ahab's - Note also the condemnation of Baasha, 1 Kings 16:4.

V.13 - "in him there is found some good thing" - Abijah was the only one in Jeroboam's house who was worthy of mercy. He died prematurely in order that he would not suffer the punishment to be brought upon his father's

house. Nadab, Jeroboam's successor, died in the conflict of civil war.

V.14 - "who shall cut off" - cp. prophecy of Baasha, 1 Kings 15:25-27.

V.15 - "reeds shaken in water" - Graphic simile of the course followed by Israel until Assyrian captivity alluded to in this verse. See a similar figure of instability, Matt.11:7.

"made their groves" - ASHERIM. To turn away is one thing, but Israel had introduced fertility gods, and had thus restored the abominations of the Amorites.

V.16 - "Jeroboam who did sin and who made Israel to sin" - Personal transgression is a serious thing - unrepented of and persisted in, it will result in condemnation. Jeroboam had sinned grievously himself but had also set out to involve the entire nation in his sin. His purpose was successful and resulted in the loss of all - Solomon was guilty of dividing the Ecclesia; Jeroboam was guilty of destroying it. Luke 17:1-2, 16:5-6.

Note - This is the first occasion where this statement or epithet occurs - it appears 19 times in Kings usually as "Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin."

V.17 - "Tirzah" - Heb. "delightsomeness", from root, to be pleased with; to satisfy a debt. Became capital under Baasha 1 Kings 15:33.

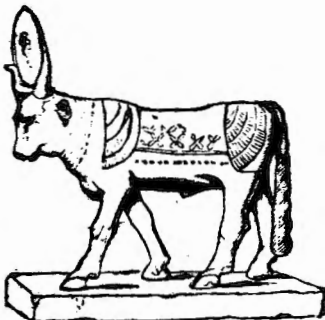
V.18 - "Israel mourned for him" - He was popular among the people as prospective successor to Jeroboam, having manifested qualities different to his father.

#### THE DEATH OF JEROBOAM 1 Kings 14:19-20

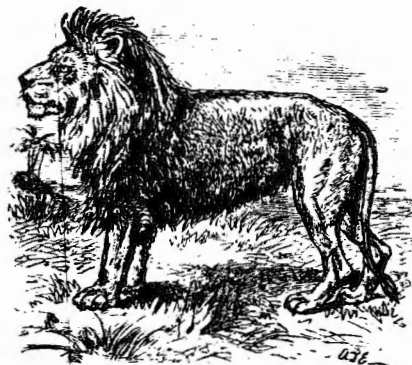
V.19 - "acts of Jeroboam" - His "acts" determined his eternal destiny. Yahweh's assessment is given in verse 16.

"warred" - Against Rehoboam (17 years) and Abijah (3 years).

V.20 - "Nadab" - Heb. "to be liberal", from root -to impel.



Jeroboam's golden calf  
Based upon the Egyptian  
deity - Apis



The Asiatic lion like the one  
which killed the man of God.

# ABIJAH - The Belligerent

(JUDAH)

Called Abijah in Chronicles and Abijam in Kings.

HEBREW - Abijah - "Yah his father"  
Abijam - "Father is (of) the sea."

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 14:31

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 14:1

LENGTH OF REIGN - 3 years

From B.C. 913-911

MOTHER - Maachah 1 Kings 15:2, 11 Chron. 11:22

Michaiah 11 Chron. 13:2

Given as daughter of Absalom and as daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. Absalom only had one daughter - Tamar 11 Sam. 14:27. Josephus says Maachah was Absalom's grand-daughter - Uriel being Tamar's husband.

Hebrew - Maachah - "Depression"

Michaiah - "Who is like Yah"

Absalom - "Father of peace"

Uriel - "Flame of El"

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Jeroboam B.C. 931-910

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The reign of the son of Rehoboam lasted only 3 years but was marked by constant warfare and rapid progress in the building up of Judah's armed forces. Abijah was a man of war - a belligerent character who was not prepared to adopt the "cold war" tactics of his father against Jeroboam but boldly took the war to Jeroboam in an attempt to recover the lost 10 tribes, despite the fact that his army was outnumbered 2 to 1.

The record concentrates attention on only one aspect of Abijah's life - his war against Jeroboam. Aggressiveness and belligerency characterise his short reign and in seeking a reason for this, attention must focus on the extraordinary words of 1 Kings 15:6. The context is the reign of Abijah and the record states "there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life," and then significantly concludes in verse 7 with the statement, "and there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam." Warfare was the heritage left to Abijah by Rehoboam his father. From the days of his early childhood right through his development into manhood and up to the time of his accession to the throne he had known nothing else but the bitterness and hatred of Rehoboam who from the division of the kingdom to his death (17 years) had maintained a continual state of war with Jeroboam.

Abijah was a product of his home life; a young man who carried

on the hatred of his father for the house of Jeroboam. There is a lesson in this - where a home is filled with bitterness, resentment, vindictiveness and revengefulness as was the house of Rehoboam, the inevitable result will be the development of the same characteristics in the children who are brought up in that atmosphere. The principle is, "train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it," Prov. 22:6: words spoken to Rehoboam by his father Solomon and therefore well known to him.

A close examination of Abijah's oration to Jeroboam and his army upon Mt. Zemaraim recorded in 11 Chron. 13:4-12, reveals that he was an intelligent man with an understanding of the requirements of the Law of Moses and its relationship to Israel's national life. Note for example his reference to "a covenant of salt", verse 5; a phrase which only occurs in Num. 18:19 in respect to the priesthood of Aaron and his family. However even in this speech it is obvious that his mind had been occupied more with the way that Jeroboam had contravened the Law rather than the way that Judah might recover itself from the apathy and laxity which had characterised Rehoboam's attitude to it.

In the final analysis Yahweh judged Abijah as a wicked king who had followed in the sins of his father and failed to follow the example of David his forefather whose heart was "perfect" or a safe repository for divine things, and for whose sake Yahweh preserved David's seed on Judah's throne, 1 Kings 15:3-5.

### A HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF ABIJAH'S REIGN

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Began to reign in Jerusalem	14:31	12:16
Prepares for war with Jeroboam		13:1-3
His oration to Israel on Mt. Zemaraim		13:4-12
Jeroboam's ambush but Judah's victory		13:13-20
Abijah's prosperity and might		13:21-22
Final summary and divine estimation	15:1-8	
His death and burial in Jerusalem	15:8	14:1

### THE DIVINE ESTIMATION OF ABIJAH 1 Kings 15:1-8

V.1 - "Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam" - Jeroboam reigned 22 years - Abijah 3 years. 11 Chron. 13:20 seems to suggest that Jeroboam died before Abijah but in fact Abijah died in Jeroboam's 20th year, 1 Kings 15:9.

V.2 - "Three years" - It must have been less than 3 full years. They were very active years as the record in Chronicles testifies.

V.3 - "walked in all the sins of his father" - His father was not Yahweh as his name suggests. He followed the pattern of his father and the sins of Rehoboam were continued.

"perfect" - SHALEM - complete; from root "to be safe". He is compared with David whose heart was single or complete; ie. it was a "safe" repository for the things of God. An example of a "safe" man is Abraham. Gen.18:17-19

V.4 - "David's sake" - How much David's posterity relied upon his integrity



and God's covenant to him for the continuance of their line. Jer.33:17. "lamp" - Heb. to glisten; a lamp, 11 Sam. 22:29.

V.6 - "there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all his days"- Abijah grew up knowing nothing but war between his father and Jeroboam. He was early made the captain of Rehoboam's armed forces to prepare him for the throne and the responsibilities of leadership, 11 Chron. 11:22. As a result he was a man of war, a lover of conflict - this reveals one effect of involving children in ecclesial troubles continually through impressionable years. What he should have been taught were the things of God and the warfare of faith, but Rehoboam had left those things behind himself and was involved in a bitter struggle to recover the 10 lost tribes.

V.7 - "there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam" - He took up where his father left off in everything, but was more active and courageous than Rehoboam. He had success against Jeroboam in the one conflict recorded but only through divine intervention.

#### WAR WITH JEROBOAM 11 Chron. 13:2-20

V.3 - "Abijah set the battle in array" - Roth.- "Abijah began the war." "set" is ACAR; to yoke or hitch. He started the conflict and organised his forces well - Abijah was not content to continue the "cold war" tactics of Rehoboam.

"valiant men of war" - Roth.- "heroes of war". "Valiant" is GIBBOR; powerful.

"Jeroboam also set the battle in array" - Jeroboam responded by marshalling his forces against Abijah and raised twice the number of men. The opposing armies are described as being of equal status and reputation.

<u>COMPARISON OF THE FORCES OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH</u>					
<u>ISRAEL</u>			<u>JUDAH</u>		
			Rehoboam	930 BC	180,000
Jeroboam	912 BC	800,000	Abijah	912 BC	400,000
			Asa	905 BC	580,000
Ahab	865 BC	"two little flocks of kids"	Jehoshaphat	873 BC	1,160,000

V.4 - "Abijah stood up on Mt. Zemaraim" - Heb. "double fleece". Situated 5 miles into territory of Israel in Mt. Ephraim. Only 2 miles from Ophrah where the miracle of the dew and the fleece occurred to Gideon twice, Judges 6:36-40. This is the first record of an invasion of the other kingdom by either Israel or Judah.

V.5 - "ought ye not to know" - In his oration to Israel on Mt. Zemaraim Abijah lays claim to the kingship of the entire nation and commences to justify his warlike activity on that basis.

"covenant of salt" - Mentioned only in Num. 18:19. Note the context which deals with the position of the family of Aaron whom Jeroboam had disregarded as priests. Salt stood for that which preserves from decay and gives savour, and accompanied all offerings, Lev. 2:13. It was a symbol of

faithfulness. Note significant use of salt as a symbol by Christ - Matt. 5:13, Luke 14:34.

V.7 - "vain men, children of Belial" - "Vain" - Heb. empty, from root "to pour out."

"Belial" - Heb. without profit, worthlessness. Roth.- "sons of the abandoned one."

"strengthened" - Roth. - "emboldened."

"young and tenderhearted" - Rehoboam was 41 at the time - not very young. He was however inexperienced and had lived a sheltered life in ease and peace. He certainly was not softhearted or "kind".

"could not withstand them" - Roth.- "Had not strengthened himself to meet them." He was indeed ill-prepared to face the campaign hardened Jeroboam.

V.8 - "now ye think to withstand" - In actual fact Abijah was the belligerent one in this conflict.

"golden calves" - He plays upon Jeroboam's apostasy - his own apostasy was perhaps not as obvious but just as real.

V.9 - "cast out the priests" - True, but there were "Sodomites" in Judah's high places as well, 1 Kings 15:12. Abijah did not have a good record himself.

"to consecrate himself" - Roth.- "install himself". Abijah was recounting the complaint of the Levitical immigrants to Judah, whom Jeroboam had rejected.

"no gods" - In this he was right and this is the most obvious difference between Israel and Judah - it is emphasised in verse 18.

"we have not forsaken him" - This is Abijah's view. In fact they had. Not by a rejection of Him or His priests but by disobedience to his Law, 11 Chron. 12:2. There is a lesson in this for those who "think they stand", and look with contempt upon those who obviously do not.

V.11-12 - "for we keep the charge of Yahweh" - Abijah makes out a good case - Judah had retained all that Jeroboam had rejected and replaced. This was good, but not enough. Judah was complacent and ceremonial punctilliousness was not matched by individual response and application to the principles of the Law.

V.13 - "Jeroboam caused an ambushment" - This dilemma illustrates Judah's position - complacent; not alert to reality. As an orator Abijah was excellent, but as a General not so good. "Pride cometh before a fall", particularly if such pride is baseless.

V.14 - "Judah looked back" - They looked to both sides and behind and realised the hopeless position they were in through an encirclement - the only way to look now was up. This response to their problem proved to be their salvation. Abijah's boasting of what Judah had done was now seen in its correct context - the Davidic line continued because of Yahweh's promise to David, not because of Abijah's or Judah's alleged righteousness - see 1 Kings 15:4.

"priests sounded with the trumpets" - This is real irony - see Num. 10:9.

V.15 - "the men of Judah shouted" - At least in trouble, Judah turned to

Yahweh and observed some stipulations of the Law - it was therefore honouring to God to assist them in the face of Israel.

V.17 - "five hundred thousand men" - This left only 300,000, less those who after their defeat saw the light and emigrated to Judah. This must have been many, for taking into account Judah's losses, only 6 or 7 years later Asa gathered together an army of 580,000.

V.19 - "took Bethel with the towns thereof" - Bethel - "the house of God". The scene of Jeroboam's idolatry and departure from God - the centre of the new cult. It was fitting he should be dispossessed of the headquarters of his idolatry - it was symbolic of the failure of his schemes. "Jeshanah" - Heb. old; from a root, to be slack or languid, ie. by sleep; to grow old or stale. It was about 5 miles north of Bethel and strategically placed.

"Ephrain" - Same as Ephron and Ophrah meaning "fawn-like". 4 to 5 miles east-north-east of Bethel, 1 mile from Zemaraim to the north.

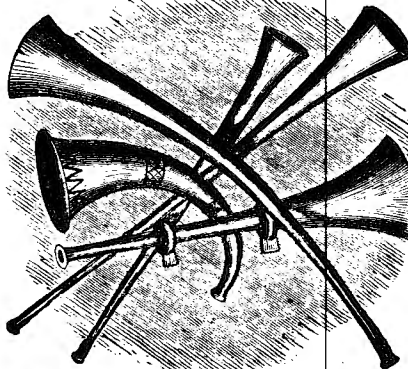
V.20 - "neither did Jeroboam recover strength" - A testimony to Judah's growing strength and Israel's waning power. "Recover" is ATSAR - to maintain, rule, assemble. Jeroboam's forces were in complete disarray so that even after 2 years no real consolidation was achieved.

"Yahweh struck him" - NAGAPH - to inflict a wound. Used in relation to Bathsheba's first son to David, 11 Sam. 12:15. In actual fact Jeroboam outlived Abijah by at least a year, but appears to have died by a divinely inflicted illness.

#### THE FINAL ACTS OF ABIJAH 11 Chron. 13:21-22

V.21 - "Abijah waxed mighty" - CHAZAQ - to fasten upon, hence to seize, be strong, restrain, conquer.

V.22 - "acts...his ways....story" - A solemn reminder that all God's children have their "ways" revealed by their "acts" which are the subject of divine scrutiny, assessment and record.



ANCIENT TRUMPETS.

"The priests sounded with the trumpets."

# ASA - Judah's First Reformer

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - ACA - "Physician."

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 15:8

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 21:12

LENGTH OF REIGN - 41 years      From B.C. 911-871

MOTHER - Given as Maachah, 1 Kings 15:10, 11 Chron. 15:16, but should be as the margin of the A.V., "grand-mother", as she was the mother of Abijah and the wife of Rehoboam. The obscurity of Asa's mother may be due to the important position occupied by Maachah as "Queen"; ie. principal lady.

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - 11 Chron. 21:12

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Jeroboam B.C. 931-910, Nadab B.C. 910-909, Baasha B.C. 909-886, Elah B.C. 886-885, Omri B.C. 885-874, Ahab B.C. 874-853.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The third king of Judah in David's lineage was a remarkable man and the complete antithesis of his father Abijah. Though a resourceful man, prepared for war, he was not a lover of war like his father. Rather was he a lover of righteousness for which Yahweh gave him peace. The contrast between father and son is beautifully portrayed in the words of 11 Chron. 14:1 which speaks of the death of Abijah and the accession of Asa and concludes; "In his days the land was quiet ten years."

By far the most outstanding feature of Asa's character was his zeal and courage in commencing a reformation that sought not only to remove idolatry from Judah and restore respect for the Mosaic system, but had as its final objective the revival of the things of God in the hearts and minds of all the people of Judah. The complete success of this national revival is a measure of Asa's strength of character and zeal.

Following closely behind his courage and zeal comes his faith and complete trust in Yahweh during times of war, for the first 35 years of his reign. The war against the invading forces of Zerah the Ethiopian is a magnificent example of faith and trust, reminiscent of David's faith before the menace of Goliath the Philistine.

The preparation of Judah's defences in a time of peace provides another fine example from the life of this outstanding ruler. He understood that war is inevitable in our life in the Truth. He did not seek it but he prepared for it and when the Truth's enemies attacked the ecclesia of God he was ready to resist them. However when war did come he did not rely solely on his own preparations and strength but threw himself upon Yahweh. It is an immutable principle that divine providence can only work in the

lives of men who are prepared to act on their best judgement and allow divine guidance to manipulate their affairs to accomplish the desired purpose. God cannot work through inactive, lethargic, and apathetic men to accomplish his purposes. Understanding this, Asa worked in cooperation with God to defend the ecclesia.

The great victory of faith by Asa over the Ethiopians produced one of the most encouraging exhortations delivered by a prophet of Yahweh to his people; "Yahweh is with you while ye be with Him....", 11 Chron. 15:1-7. From this developed the greatest spiritual revival since the days of David - a reformation that was only equalled again during the reign of Hezekiah. The result was a period of 20 years peace and quietness in Judah.

Tragically, the life of Asa ended on a sour note. The 20 year peace had dulled the lively faith of his earlier years, and when the war-like Baasha of Israel attacked Judah he immediately sought the help of Ben-hadad king of Syria - contrast this with his reaction to the attack by Zerah the Ethiopian. Yahweh rebuked Asa through Hanani the prophet whom Asa then took and placed in stocks while at the same time oppressing those who sympathised with Hanani. For this act Yahweh smote Asa with a disease in his feet, being poetical justice for binding the feet of the prophet.

In his distress Asa (his name means "physician") who had done so much to heal Judah's "sickness" by the power of God, sought to human physicians to cure his ills. This was a revelation of the spirit of self-reliance that had clouded his last years and brought him to the grave a disappointing figure in view of the greatness of his early years.

The divine assessment is given in 1 Kings 15:11; "He did that which was right in the eyes of Yahweh." Any assessment of his failures in later life must take into account the words of 1 Kings 15:14 and 11 Chron. 15:17; "The heart of Asa was perfect all his days."

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF ASA'S REIGN

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Began to reign in Jerusalem	15:8	14:1
Summary of reign - divine estimation	15:9-11	14:2
His purge of idolatry	15:12-14	14:3-5
The eviction of Maachah for idolatry	15:13	15:16-17
Dedication of vessels in Temple	15:15	15:18-19
Establishes strong defences		14:6-8
War with Zerah king of Ethiopia		14:9-15
Azariah's prophecy of encouragement		15:1-7
Asa introduces a national revival		15:8-15
Threat from Baasha - league with Assyria	15:16-22	16:1-6
Hanani condemns Asa's league		16:7-10
Asa smitten with diseased feet	15:23	16:11-12
Death and burial	15:24	16:13-14

### THE PURGE OF IDOLATRY 11 Chron. 14:3-5

V.3 - "he took away the altars" - Roth. - "took away the foreign altars."  
"high places" - As 1 Kings 15:14 says that the high places were not removed, it seems that Asa curtailed activity at them but did not abolish

them as did Hezekiah much later.

"images" - MATSTSEBAH - a column, idol.

"groves" - ASHERIM - standing idols, a fertility god.

V.4 - "and commanded Judah" - Having destroyed the idols Asa substituted good for the evil - this is the positive way to defeat idolatry.

"seek" - DARASH - to tread, frequent, follow.

V.5 - "high places" - Removed from Judah but not from Israel, 11 Chron.15:17

"kingdom was quiet" - SHAQAT - to repose. cp. verse 1 - 10 years peace.

The result of Asa's righteousness, verse 6, and a complete contrast with the reign of his father.

### 1 Kings 15:12-14

V.12 - "sodomites" - The ritual prostitutes introduced in the days of Rehoboam to serve as priests in the high places were removed along with the idol-gods they served, 1 Kings 14:24.

V.13 - "Maachah his mother" - Should be "grand-mother" - the favourite wife of Rehoboam, 11 Chron. 11:21.

"Queen" - HAGGEBIRA - principal lady; mistress. Maachah was still active as Rehoboam had only been dead about 3 years at the time of Asa's accession.

"idol in a grove" - ASHERAH - (feminine). Roth. - "she had made a monstrous thing to the sacred stem." "Idol" is MIPHLETSETH - a terror; used in verb form Job 9:6, sig. an earthquake.

"destroyed" - KARATH - to cut off, consume.

"Kidron" - The rubbish dump of Jerusalem (ie. the area near Valley of the son of Hinnom) - see 11 Kings 23:6.

"Kidron" - QIDROWN - from root, to be ashy, ie. dark, coloured.

V.14 - "Asa's heart was perfect" - SHALEM - complete; from a root, to be safe. See note on 1 Kings 15:3 (Abijah).

### STRONG DEFENCES ESTABLISHED 11 Chron. 14:6-8

V.6 - "he built fenced cities" - A time of peace from Yahweh did not mean a cessation of preparing for a time of war. Asa used foresight and wisdom and capitalised on this divinely provided opportunity to prepare the defences of Judah.

V.7 - "he hath given us rest" - Asa was not complacent or slothful - he recognised that the time of peace was a reward for seeking Yahweh and should be used to the fullest advantage.

"prospered" - TSALEACH - to push forward. Asa and Judah were using the formula for success - cooperation with God.

V.8 - "Asa had an army" - This was an offensive measure to balance defensive measures, so as to meet every contingency. The strength of his army - 580,000. This is the answer to all enemies - a strong ecclesia because all of its individual members are strong and united.

"targets" - ie. shields.



WAR WITH ETHIOPIA 11 Chron. 14:9-15

V.9 - "Zerah" - Heb. "a rising of light". A misnomer - He stands as a type of the world - the enemy of the ecclesia. His army numbered 1,000,000 with 300 chariots.

"Mareshah" - Heb. "summit, chief place". 20 miles s.w. of Jerusalem.

V.10 - "Zephathah" - Heb. "watch-tower".

V.11 - "Asa cried unto Yahweh" - Prayer before entering into battle important. Asa states his confidence in God - with him there was no confidence in his own strength though perhaps he had reason to be confident in it. He knew all his preparations would be useless without Divine help at this crisis.

"we rest on thee" - SHAAN - to support oneself. Roth. "on thee do we lean". Here is a lesson in how to wage successful war-fare in the Truth even against great odds - prepare yourself diligently using every opportunity provided, but in the crisis commit your cause into the hands of Yahweh not trusting in the arm of flesh.

"in thy name" - Not in Asa's name - a revelation of Asa's humility and faith. This kind of appeal from a faithful man, Yahweh will not turn away.

"let not man prevail against thee" - ENOSH - mortal, from the root, to be frail. Roth. "weak man".

V.12 - "so Yahweh smote the Ethiopians" - The Divine reply - Yahweh is bountiful and consistent. The request of a faithful and righteous man in Asa's circumstances he will not refuse.

"before Asa and before Judah" - Note that Asa is specifically mentioned. The king was the real force behind Judah's spiritual revival.

V.13 - "Gerar" - Heb. "rolling" (country). 45 miles s.w. of Jerusalem on the border with Egypt. Asa stopped short of entering the enemy's territory - he was satisfied with driving the world out of the ecclesia.

"destroyed" - SHABAR - to burst.

V.14 - "for the fear of Yahweh came upon them" - Asa extends his victory and takes much spoil. The whole victory was due to Divine help working in cooperation with human initiative and activity.

THE NATIONAL REVIVAL 11 Chron. 15:1-16

V.1 - "the Spirit of God" - This particular phrase is only used in 11 Chron. 24:20. It points to a special occasion of divine communication - Yahweh saw the need for a warning and an exhortation. Perhaps the purge and revival of Asa 15 years earlier had not gone deep enough or seen a true repentance in the people of Judah for he had "commanded" them. Idolatry, immorality, complacency and indifference are not easily removed. The initial purge needed to be followed by a positive campaign to bring a true revival.

"Azariah" - Heb. "Yahweh has helped".

"Oded" - Heb. "reiteration", from the root to duplicate.

V.2 - "Yahweh is with you while ye be with Him" - A magnificent encouragement, but also a statement of fact. Divine help is dependant upon our

approach to God. cp. James 4:8, Lev.10:3.

V.3-6 - This is a general summary of Israel's past - the point being emphasised was that adversity was divinely sent to punish sin. This in itself by inference reveals that a state of affairs now existed which was much different to the past.

V.7 - "be ye strong therefore" - CHAZAQ - be strong, courageous - same word used Josh. 1:7&9.

"hands be weak" - RAPHA - to slacken. Roth. - "there is a reward for your work." A balanced exhortation of warning and encouragement. It is interesting to reflect that Asa's hands were never weak but that he died diseased in his feet.

V.8 - "prophecy of Oded" - Some texts have "the prophecy of Azariah the son of Oded" as in verse 1.

"he took courage" - CHAZAQ - As above in verse 7. An immediate response to the exhortation.

"abominable idols" - SHIQQUTS - disgusting, filthy.

A renewed purge of idolatry through Judah and Benjamin and into captured territory became the basis upon which a spiritual revival was built.

Note the principle - first cleansing then rededication.

"renewed the altar" - CHADASH - to be new; to rebuild; the idea is to repair. The altar of Burnt Offering now became the centre of national attention due to the rededication sacrifices.

V.9 - "strangers" - Roth. - "sojourners". The result of Asa's faith and righteousness was Yahweh's help. All who were sympathetic to divine things saw in Asa a leader who could be followed and relied upon. He was the first good king in Israel for 40 years. Great numbers flocked to him out of Israel seeking a return to the "old paths" established by David.

V.10 - "third month" - The feast of weeks (Pentecost) was held in this month commencing the 4th day. It was the time of the offering of the first-fruits of harvest and free-will offerings in recognition that Israel's blessings were all from Yahweh and that He deserved the first and best of their labours.

V.12 - "they entered into a covenant" - A new thing in Judah - a return to the principles of the Law, Deut. 6:5 so blatantly disregarded by Rehoboam and Abijah.

V.15 - "Judah rejoiced at the oath" - It was a genuine rededication not forced upon them, the result of good leadership and individual willingness to throw off the apostasy of Jeroboam, Rehoboam and Abijah and return to the purity of the Truth.

"desire" - RATSON - delight (pleasure).

"and was found of them" - This manifested the reality of verse 4 and a divine blessing of peace ensued.

### THE INTERVAL - 20 YEARS PEACE 11 Chron. 15:16-19

V.18 - "he brought into the house of God" - Concentration by Asa upon

promoting the Temple services - he substituted substantial and positive things for the idols he had removed - cp. principle Luke 11:24-26.

V.19 - "there was no more war" - 20 years of peace followed - a long interval providing a test of faith. Would Asa's faith lose its vitality after so long a period of peace and tranquility?

### A FOOLISH LEAGUE WITH SYRIA 11 Chron. 16:1-10

V.1 - "six and thirtieth year" - ie. 20 years since Ethiopian War.

"Baasha" - Heb. to stink, offensiveness. Had been on the throne of Israel since the 3rd year of Asa and according to 1 Kings 15:33 he reigned for 24 years dying in Asa's 27th year - this discrepancy appears to arise from this verse as other synchronisms agree with the record in Kings.

"built Ramah" - Heb. a height. Only about 6 or 7 miles north of Jerusalem on road to Bethel and Shechem. A town commanding a height overlooking the route to Jerusalem.

"none go out or come in to Asa" - The perturbing migration of many from Israel to Judah resulted in strong action by Baasha. He resolved to stop the erosion of his subjects by force, and so moved the frontier south to a commanding and defensible position, thus recapturing the territory lost to Abijah by Jeroboam.

Note Asa's fear of Baasha - Jer. 41:9.

V.2 - "Then Asa brought out silver and gold" - Asa was apparently unprepared for this crisis and being hard-pressed decided to send to Syria for help. He used treasures from the Temple and the Palace. This was a turning point in Asa's life - a change of attitude to the Truth, manifested under pressure, but developed over many years.

"Benhadad, king of Syria" - "Son of the god Hadad" - Hadad was the equivalent of the Canaanite Baal. It means "thunderer".

Rezon was founder of Syrian kingdom based in Damascus, 1 Kings 11:23-24. A number of kings followed named Benhadad; under their leadership Syria became a powerful nation until finally overthrown by Assyria, B.C. 732.

V.3 - "There is a league between me and thee" - "League" is BERITH; a covenant. Roth. - "Let there be a covenant between me and thee." This is a turnabout from 11 Chron. 15:12 where a covenant was made with Yahweh following a wonderful victory through His help.

"as there was between my father and thy father" - Not mentioned elsewhere but is consistent with the character of Abijah - Asa now follows his father's bad example.

"go break thy league with Baasha" - Asa ought to have realised that if Benhadad could break a league with Baasha he could and would with Asa. Yahweh was the only one who would not forsake his part in a covenant.

V.4 - "And Benhadad hearkened" - Benhadad cooperates, doubtless for reasons of self interest and political expediency.

"Ijon" - Heb. ruin.

"Dan" - Heb. judgement. The city of Jeroboam's idolatrous calf worship. Abijah by his campaign had captured Bethel, 11 Chron. 13:19; now Asa through the agency of Benhadad took Dan.

"Abel-maim" - Heb. "Meadow of water". Called Abel-beth-maachah, 1 Kings 15:13, "Meadow of the house of depression".

"store cities" - Roth. - "Storehouses of the cities."

"Naphtali" - Heb. "My wrestling".

V.5 - "he left off building of Ramah" - Baasha forced to abandon Ramah to concentrate on halting Syrian progress in the north. He went to Tirzah. 1 Kings 15:21.

V.6 - "took all Judah" - He was able to muster all Judah - Why had he not fought Baasha? see 1 Kings 15:22.

"Geba" - Heb. "a hillock". Asa fortified this place which was 2 miles N.E. of Ramah with materials from Baasha's work at Ramah.

"Mizpah" - Heb. "an observatory" - 3 miles north of Ramah.

### ASA REBUKED BY A PROPHET 11 Chron. 16:7-10

V.7 - "Hanani the seer" - Heb. "gracious".

"because thou hast relied" - SHAAN - to support oneself, the same word as "rest" in 14:11. Asa now had changed supports. He now rested on flesh instead of Yahweh.

"host of Syria escaped" - Asa was not fighting with Syria - however Yahweh had apparently intended an overthrow of Syria by Judah. Divine intentions had been frustrated.

V.8 - "Lubims" - The primitive Lybians.

V.9 - "the eyes of Yahweh run to and fro" - Roth. "For as touching Yahweh seeing that His eyes are ever running to and fro throughout all the earth". A reiteration of the principle of 11 Chron.15:2.

"perfect" - SHALEM - to be complete, from the root to be safe.

"herein thou hast done foolishly" - CAKAL - to be silly, ie. a foolish act. Asa was not a fool but in this matter had acted foolishly - it was out of character.

"thou shalt have wars" - Asa trusted in the flesh in this matter so his punishment was to be continual war (trouble from the flesh). Yahweh had given him peace but had been overlooked by Asa when war loomed - by trying to save himself he brought upon himself perpetual trouble.

V.10 - "Asa was wrath with the seer" - Sometimes great men do foolish things. Asa had done foolishly but now compounds his error by imprisoning Hanani - this was human pride. Years of prosperity had whittled away humility and a readiness to hear rebuke. Prov.9:8.

"prison house" - MAHPEKETH - a wrench, ie. the stocks. Asa was justly repaid, see v12.

"in a rage" - ZAAPH - anger, (to boil up).

"oppressed" - RATSATS - to crack in pieces. This is difficult to understand but illuminating in regard to human nature and the effect of unmixed prosperity upon spiritual life.

### ASA DISEASED IN HIS FEET 11 Chron. 16:11-12

V.12 - "thirty and ninth year" - 3 years after v10.

"diseased" - CHALAH - weak, sick. (from the root to be rubbed or worn).

"exceeding great" - Roth. "exceedingly severe". The punishment fitted the

crime.v10.

"he sought not Yahweh but the Physicians" - RAPHA - to mend (by stitching) ie.cure. Another indication that Asa's faith had slipped disastrously - he still trusted in the flesh. Human beings do not have the answer to a diseased "walk". As Asa means "physician" perhaps this could be paraphrased. "He sought not Yahweh but the Asa's". It is indicative of the self reliance which had blotted a good reign.

### ASA'S DEATH AND BURIAL 11 Chron. 16:13-14

V.14 - "own sepulchres ... made for himself" - Roth.-"in his own stately sepulchre which he had hewn for himself". He had evidently prepared well for his death - it was tragic that such a man should die with the symbol of a corrupt walk. (diseased feet)

"sweet odours" - A common practice in those times but seemingly out of place here - the flesh must corrupt and nothing can arrest the progress of sin, disease and death but the power of God.

"Apothecaries art" - MIRQACHATH - aromatic unguent. Roth.-"perfumers art."

"they made a very great burning for him" - Asa was mourned by the people. Some suggest that the burning was to remove all traces of the corruption of his feet but cp. 11 Chron.21:19.

### THE CHRONOLOGICAL DATA OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL

<u>KING</u>	<u>SYNCHRONISM</u>	<u>LENGTH OF REIGN</u>	<u>1 Kings</u>
Jeroboam		22 years	14:20
Nadab	2nd of Asa	2 years	15:25
Baasha	3rd of Asa	24 years	15:28,33
Elah	26th of Asa	2 years	16:8
Zimri	27th of Asa	7 days	16:10,15
Omri	31st of Asa	12 years	16:23
Ahab	38th of Asa	22 years	16:29
Ahaziah	17th of Jehoshaphat	2 years	22:51
Jehoram	18th of Jehoshaphat	12 years	11 Kings 3:1
Jehu		28 years	10:36
Jehoahaz	23rd of Joash	17 years	13:1
Jehoash	37th of Joash	16 years	13:10
Jeroboam	15th of Amaziah	41 years	14:23
Zachariah	38th of Uzziah	6 months	15:8
Shallum	39th of Uzziah	1 month	15:13
Menahem	39th of Uzziah	10 years	15:17
Pekahiah	50th of Uzziah	2 years	15:23
Pekah	52nd of Uzziah	20 years	15:27
Hoshea	12th of Ahaz	9 years	17:1

Refer to a similar chart on Judah - Page 49

# NADAB - The Liberal

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Liberal"

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 14:20

LAST MENTION - 1 Kings 15:31

LENGTH OF REIGN - 2 years

From B.C. 910-909

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Asa B.C. 911-871

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Little is known of the son of Jeroboam that would permit a firm character assessment, but to the extent which the meaning of his name may provide a clue that accords with the divine assessment of his reign, it is possible to suggest that Nadab's leading characteristic was a liberal attitude to the things of God.

All that is known of him is that he was satisfied to continue the idolatry of his father without modification despite the accumulating evidence that Yahweh had turned His face against the house of Jeroboam. Unlike Abijah his deceased brother, Nadab was an exact replica of his father and fully deserved the punishment which fell upon Jeroboam's house.

## SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF NADAB

	<u>1 Kings</u>
Accession and divine summary	15:25-26
Assassination by Baasha	15:27-31

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

### NADAB'S ACCESSION AND CHARACTER 1 Kings 15:25-26

V.25 - "and reigned over Israel two years" - Acceded in 2nd year of Asa but was deposed in 3rd year of Asa, verse 28. So he did not reign a full 2 yrs.

V.26 - "and walked in the way of his father" - He was an exact replica of his father Jeroboam unlike Abijah his deceased elder brother. He made no attempt to change anything but followed in Jeroboam's footsteps perpetuating his false system of worship in Israel.

### NADAB'S DEATH 1 Kings 15:27-31

V.27 - "and Baasha smote him" - He died at the hand of Baasha while besieging Gibbethon.

"Gibbethon" - Heb. "a hilly spot". 5 miles north of Ekron in Philistia.

V.31 - "are they not written" - This implies another record existed with more complete details but Yahweh did not see fit to preserve it as the book of Chronicles does not mention Nadab.

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# BAASHA -

## The Unheeding Avenger

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - BASHA - "to stink, offensiveness"

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 15:16

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 16:6

LENGTH OF REIGN - 24 years (1 Kings 15:33)

From B.C. 909-886

FATHER - Ahijah - "Brother (ie. worshipper) of Yah."

TRIBE - Issachar (meaning "He will bring a reward")

CAPITAL - Tirzah - "Delightsomeness".

CONTEMPORARY KING - Asa B.C. 911-871

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Baasha was an ideal choice as Yahweh's judge to remove Jeroboam's house in accordance with Ahijah's prophecy, 1 Kings 14:10-11. It is fitting that he was the son of another Ahijah, 1 Kings 15:27. Ruthless ambition motivated this man to seek the throne of Israel and so he became an effective instrument of judgement in God's hands.

Although Baasha reigned for 24 years, little is recorded of him except the cruel and ruthless manner in which he disposed of Jeroboam's posterity, and the warlike stance that he adopted towards Judah. He was obviously a cold, unfeeling man, driven only by considerations of personal status and profit.

Perhaps the most significant thing recorded of Baasha is the unheeding manner in which he continued the apostasy of Jeroboam despite the judgement that had been poured out upon his house. Both in the words of Jehu the prophet and in the closing summary of his reign in 1 Kings 16:7 it is clear that Baasha was condemned because of his failure to reflect upon the reasons why God had destroyed Jeroboam's house. If that house had been destroyed because of idolatry and apostasy, then Baasha should have realised that he too would be destroyed if he perpetuated Jeroboam's apostasy.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF BAASHA'S REIGN

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Assassinates Nadab - destroys Jeroboam's house	15:27-30	
Divine summary and estimation	15:32-34	
Attacks Asa but forced to withdraw		16:1-6
Jehu's prophecy against him	16:1-7	
Death and burial in Tirzah	16:6	

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESTHE RISE OF THE HOUSE OF BAASHA 1 Kings 15:27-30

V.27 - "son of Ahijah" - It was ironical that the man to fulfil the words of Ahijah the prophet, 1 Kings 14:14, should be the son of another Ahijah. "conspired" - QASHAR - to tie. ie. he went about gaining support for a coup.

"Issachar" - Irony again - the name means "he will bring a reward", which he did - judgement.

"Gibbethon" - Belonged originally to Dan, Josh. 19:44.

V.29 - "he smote all the house of Jeroboam" - Baasha acting upon natural impulse after the pattern of all tyrants wiped out every vestige of Jeroboam's house. He doubtless did not know the prophecy of 1 Kings 14:10-11 but fulfilled it to the letter.

DIVINE SUMMARY AND ESTIMATION 1 Kings 15:32-34

V.32 - "there was war between Asa and Baasha" - Continual war with Baasha is implied but Asa had many years of peace. This was then a continual state of war but not armed conflict until late in Asa's reign.

V.34 - "he did evil in the sight of Yahweh" - He was evil before Yahweh - power was his only interest and self-centred men do not make faithful or good men.

"walked in the way of Jeroboam" - He was also shallow. A reflecting, deep thinking mind would cogitate upon the reasons for Jeroboam's demise and act to avoid a similar disaster. To continue in the way of Jeroboam was to ensure failure.

JEHU'S PROPHECY AGAINST BAASHA 1 Kings 16:1-7

V.1 - "Jehu" - "Yahweh is he". A fitting name for a divine representative. "son of Hanani" - Heb. gracious. Perhaps the same prophet who rebuked Asa, 11 Chron. 16:7. This Jehu also recorded a history of Jehoshaphat king of Judah which means he must have been fairly young at this point, 11 Chron. 20:34. He also encountered Jehoshaphat with a prophecy well into that king's reign, 11 Chron. 19:2. (After the death of Ahab - 50 years later). This is a further indication of his age at this time.

V.2 - "I exalted thee out of the dust" - A shock to Baasha who doubtless considered that his position was due to his own hand and designs. It was Yahweh through providence who was using his ambition to fulfil prophecy.

"prince" - NAGID - a commander; lit. "stand boldly out opposite"; used of Jeroboam, 1 Kings 14:7.

"hast made my people Israel to sin" - A continuation of Jeroboam's policies and religious system.

V.3 - "will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam" - Same sins - same destiny with no respect of persons. The judge was to be judged - the avenger avenged.

V.4 - "him that dieth of Baasha" - Note identical words to Jeroboam, 14:11.

V.5 - "his might" - GEBUWRAH - force; valour. God did not desire to include

details of Baasha's life in the scriptures- he was not worthy of it.

V.6 - "Tirzah" - Now the established capital of Israel.

V.7 - "work of his hands" - No record of it but Baasha was not apathetic but active in pursuing Jeroboam's ways for his own personal aggrandisement and pleasure.

"because he killed him" - He killed Nadab - not Jeroboam. Roth.- "becoming like the house of Jeroboam - notwithstanding that he smote him." The sense is that though Baasha was the divine instrument for the punishment of Jeroboam's house he perpetuated the same sins which had precipitated divine judgement. Did he believe that he would escape punishment?

### THE CHRONOLOGICAL DATA OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH

<u>KING</u>	<u>SYNCHRONISM</u>	<u>LENGTH OF REIGN</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Rehoboam		17 years	1 Kings 14:21	12:13
Abijah	18th of Jeroboam	3 years	1 Kings 15:1-2	13:1
Asa	20th of Jeroboam	41 years	1 Kings 15:9-10	16:13
Jehoshaphat	4th of Ahab	25 years	1 Kings 22:41-42 <u>11 Kings</u>	20:31
Jehoram	5th of Jehoram	8 years	8:16-17	21:5
Ahaziah	12th of Jehoram	1 year	8:25-26	22:2
Athaliah		6 years	11:3-4	22:12
Joash	7th of Jehu	40 years	12:1	24:1
Amaziah	2nd of Jehoash	29 years	14:1-2	25:1
Azariah (Uzziah)	27th of Jeroboam	52 years	15:1-2	26:3
Jotham	2nd of Pekah	16 years	15:32-33	27:1
Ahaz	17th of Pekah	16 years	16:1-2	28:1
Hezekiah	3rd of Hoshea	29 years	18:1-2	29:1
Manasseh		55 years	21:1	33:1
Amon		2 years	21:19	33:21
Josiah		31 years	22:1	34:1
Jehoahaz		3 months	23:31	36:2
Jehoiakim		11 years	23:36	36:5
Jehoiachin		3 months 10 days	24:8	36:9
Zedekiah		11 years	24:18	36:11

Refer to similar chart on Israel - Page 45.

# ELAH -

## The Apathetic Drunkard (ISRAEL)

HEBREW - ELAH - An oak or other strong tree.

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 16:6

LAST MENTION - 1 Kings 16:14

LENGTH OF REIGN - 2 years

From B.C. 886-885

FATHER - Baasha

TRIBE - Issachar

CAPITAL - Tirzah

CONTEMPORARY KING - Asa B.C. 911-871.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Only one incident in the life of Elah has found its way into the inspired record of the kings of Israel and Judah, and that event was his assassination by Zimri, captain of his chariots.

While the army of Israel was besieging Gibbethon, Elah was drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, his palace steward. He is revealed as a man who was apathetic to the national interests of Israel because of his love for the titillating pleasures of strong drink. His complacency brought about his demise because it allowed men like Zimri, Omri and Tibni to conspire against him among the army of Israel in his absence.

### SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF ELAH

Accession and assassination by Zimri

1 Kings  
16:8-10

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ELAH'S ACCESSION AND ASSASSINATION 1 Kings 16:8-10

V.9 - "servant Zimri" - EBED - a servant. Zimri means "musical", from rt. to strike with the fingers; touch the strings.

"captain of half his chariots" - SAR - a head person - Evidently Elah had divided his forces. While the rest of Israel besieged Gibbethon, Zimri was not at the scene but elsewhere plotting a coup. 1 Kings 16:15

"Tirzah" - "Delightsomeness".

"drinking himself drunk" - Giving vent to fleshly lust and wantonness.

"Arza" - ARTSA - "earthiness". Roth. - "Who was over the household in Tirzah."

V.10 "Zimri went in and smote him" - The assassination of Elah while he was drunk was a fitting end for Baasha's line.

V.14 - "are they not written" - Not worthy of more mention than this.

# ZIMRI - The Reckless Assassin

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Musical"; root, to strike strings with the fingers.

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 16:9

LAST MENTION - 11 Kings 9:31

LENGTH OF REIGN - 7 days

During B.C. 885

CAPITAL - Tirzah

CONTEMPORARY KING - Asa B.C. 911-871.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Zimri is distinguished among the 39 kings of Israel and Judah as the man with the shortest reign - 7 days; and as the man remembered by Jezebel for his treason, 11 Kings 9:31.

Reckless and cruel ambition was again used by Yahweh to accomplish the destruction of Baasha's house even as He had raised up Baasha to destroy Jeroboam's house. Zimri was a reckless opportunist who eagerly sought the monarchy but without first gaining adequate support from Israel's armed forces. His coup was premature because when the bulk of the army, who were besieging Gibbethon heard of Elah's death and Zimri's accession they promptly installed Omri as king and marched on Tirzah to overthrow the usurper.

The glory of the monarchy so murderously craved by Zimri was shortlived - within 7 days he was dead by his own hand. The nature of his death illustrates his character. He committed suicide in the manner of the nihilist, virtually saying to Omri; "If I cannot sit on the throne and occupy the palace of the king at Tirzah, then neither will you." So he burnt the palace over himself. Zimri was a reckless, petty and blood-thirsty fool with an ambition that far outweighed his intelligence to accomplish it.

## SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF ZIMRI

His treason - massacres Baasha's house  
Zimri's short reign and suicide

1 Kings  
16:9-14  
16:15-20

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

### ZIMRI'S TREASON AND ACCESSION 1 Kings 16:9-14

V.9 - "captain of half his chariots" - Zimri was a military specialist in chariot warfare - an important figure in the nation.

V.11 - "he slew all the house of Baasha" - His first task was to destroy all of Elah's relatives and friends - a natural thing for a tyrant succeeding by treason, but the hand of Yahweh was at work to fulfil

prophecy, 1 Kings 16:1-7.

V.13 - "vanities" - HEBEL - emptiness. A reference to their idoltrous practises.

### ZIMRI'S REIGN AND SUICIDE 1 Kings 16:15-20

V.15 - "Gibbethon" - In Philistine territory S.S.W. of Tirzah.

V.16 - "the people...heard say" - The news took a couple of days to reach the army.

"Israel made Omri, captain of the host, king" - Omri was commander in chief of Israel's forces and naturally considered himself to be a successor to Elah - so did Israel. They went to beseige Tirzah and overthrow Zimri.

V.18 - "and burnt the kings house over him" - Zimri suicides to save death at Omri's hands and simultaneously destroyed the palace. His policy was that if he was to be denied the throne and the palace, so would Omri.

V.19 - "for his sins" - He only reigned one week. His ways however, were known to Yahweh. He was cast in the same mould as Jeroboam.

V.20 - "treason" - QESHER - an alliance. Doubtless he had sympathisers and accomplices - one may have been Arza, verse 9. Zimri was notable only for his treason - he was well remembered by Jezebel, 11 Kings 9:31.



A Battle



# OMRI - The Statute-maker

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - OMRIY - "Heaping".

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 16:16

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 22:2

LENGTH OF REIGN - 12 years

From B.C. 885-874

CAPITAL - Tirzah (6 years), Samaria (6 years).

CONTEMPORARY KING - Asa B.C. 911-871

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - Micah 6:16, 11 Chron. 22:2, 11 Kings 8:26.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The father of Ahab became the most powerful influence on the kingdom of Israel since Jeroboam the first king. He established a dynasty which lasted nearly 50 years and had a profound influence on the destiny of the nation. It was Omri who built the city of Samaria which was the capital of Israel until the Assyrian captivity. It was Omri who brought up and educated Israel's worst king - Ahab: and doubtless played a part in forging the political alliance with Ethbaal King of the Zidonians which led to Ahab taking in marriage Jezebel his daughter; an arrangement which was to have immeasurable consequences for Israel and Judah.

Omri was a politically successful man because he was self-motivated and determined. He possessed a self-interested initiative and was evidently a man capable of immense influence in the lives of other people. This is the impression gained from the brief record of his life and one important reference to him in Micah 6:16.

Micah records, "For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab". This is a divine commentary upon Omri - he was a man of ideas and of schemes; albeit evil schemes. From these ideas he formulated principles and statutes which were readily grasped and acted upon by Ahab his son. The power and influence of Omri's statute-making is revealed in a curious description of Athaliah his grand-daughter - 11 Chron. 22:2-3. She is here spoken of as the daughter of Omri, not as the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. The reason becomes apparent when in verse 3 it is recorded that Ahaziah "also walked in the ways (or works, Mic.6:16) of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly". Athaliah was her son's statute-maker hence she is termed the daughter of Omri.

Omri left an indelible mark on the history of his nation - His reign was a turning point in that history and commenced an even greater period of apostasy than that which had existed from the days of Jeroboam. Tragically, the statutes of Omri also found their way into Judah and ushered in one of Judah's darkest periods in the years subsequent to the reign of King Jehoshaphat.

SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF OMRI

	<u>1 Kings</u>
His rise during political turmoil	16:16-18
Wins the civil war against Tibni	16:21-22
Establishes Samaria as capital	16:23-24
The unprecedented evil of his reign	16:25-28

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESPOLITICAL TURMOIL AND RIVALRY 1 Kings 16:16-22

V.16 - "the captain of the host" - Head of the armed forces. Zimri had slain all the royal family. No successors in Baasha's line remained - Omri was the natural choice as king.

V.17 - "and Omri went up" - Gibbethon was left unconquered - there were more important issues at stake. The army of Israel at Gibbethon followed Omri. This is the first indication of the fact that he was a powerful and influential man.

V.21 - "Israel divided" - A time of intrigues and personal rivalries as the strong vied for positions of power. Such turmoil and national distress was the result of Jeroboam's apostasy.

"Tibni the son of Ginath" - Tibni means "straw" (chaff), perhaps, "man of straw". Ginath means "garden". He was a challenger for the throne who succeeded in gaining the support of half the people.

V.22 - "Omri prevailed" - The civil war lasted 3 years as Zimri's reign had commenced in Asa's 28th year, verse 8, and Omri began his reign in Asa's 31st year, verse 23.

V.23 - "twelve years, six years reigned he in Tirzah" - Not satisfied with Tirzah ("Delightsomeness") he resolved to shift his capital. This was a mark of the independence and strength of Omri. He is revealed as a self-motivated man with firm ideas and direction in life.

V.24 - "bought the hill Samaria of Shemer" - Samaria - Heb. SHOMEROWN - "watch-station", root; to guard. Shemer - Heb. - Something preserved, ie. the settlements. Both words are from the same root; SHAMAR - to hedge about ie. to guard, protect. SHEMER is translated as "dregs", Ps. 75:8 and as "(wine on the) lees", Isa. 25:6, Jer. 48:11, Zeph. 1:12. In view of the woe of Isa. 28:1 this is quite significant.

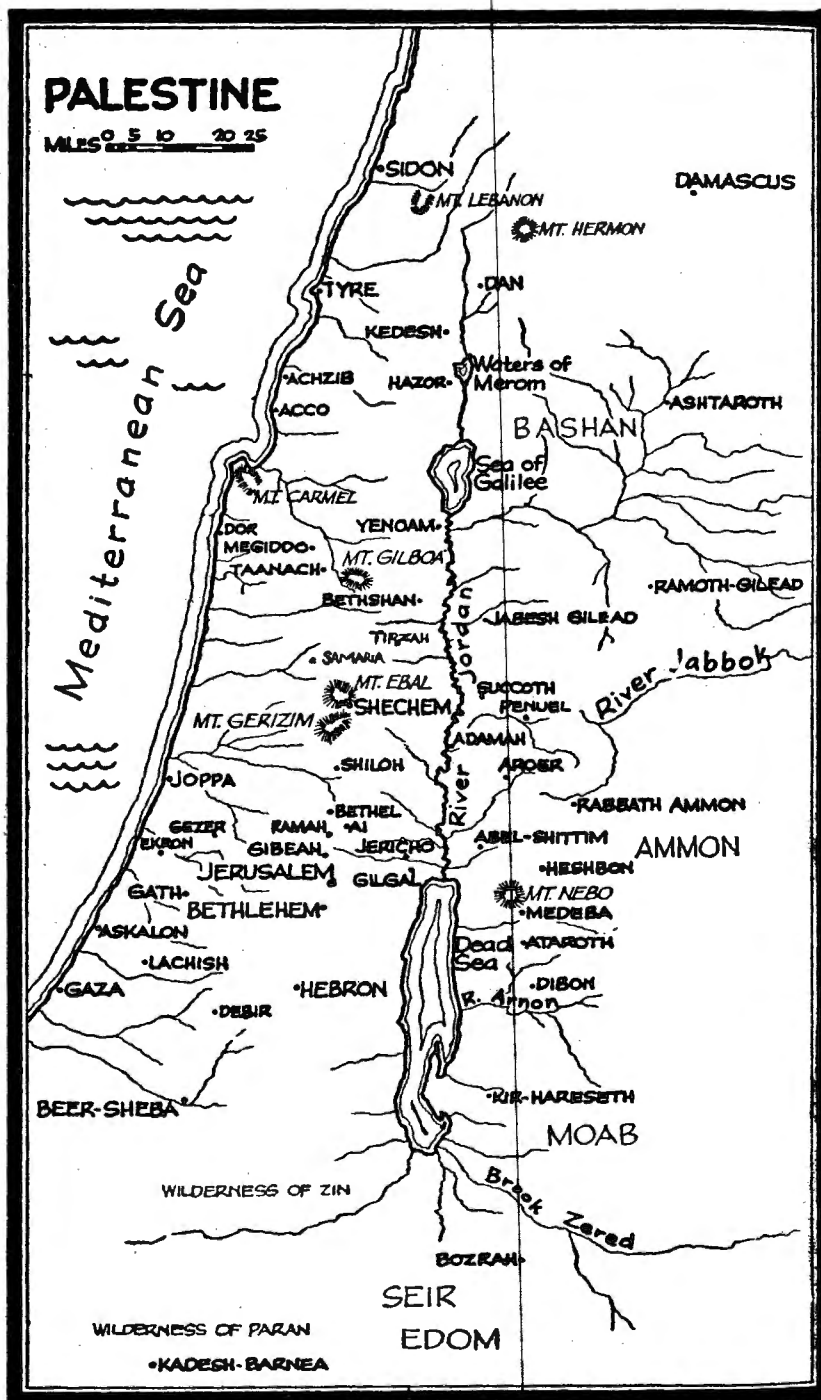
The Hill of Samaria was about 300 feet high in a basin formed by a valley which runs from Shechem to the coast of the Mediterranean. It was on the north side of the valley where an incoming glen joined the valley. It is surrounded by mountains on three sides with a view to the west. A broad vale sweeps westward visible for 8 miles to a range of low hills. Beyond them the sea lies another 23 miles away.

OMRI'S EVIL REIGN 1 Kings 16:25-28

V.25 - "wrought evil" - Roth.- "and Omri did the thing that was wicked." To use the modern colloquialism, "he did his own thing", which invariably is far removed from God's will.

"did worse" - Roth.- "did more wickedly."

<u>"to anger with their vanities" - "Anger"</u> is HEBEL - emptiness. A reference to the	is KKAC - to trouble. "Vanities" abominable idolatries of Israel
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# AHAB - Israel's Worst King

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - ACHAB - "Brother (ie. friend) of his father."  
"Resembling the father" - Noth.

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 16:28

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 22:8

LENGTH OF REIGN - 22 years

From B.C. 874-853

FATHER - Omri ("heaping")

WIFE - Jezebel - "chaste", cp. Rev. 2:20. Daughter of Ethbaal ("With or near Baal") king of the Zidonians ("to catch fish") - See Judges 18:7, 11 Kings 23:13.

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Asa B.C. 911-871, Jehoshaphat B.C. 871-847.

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - Micah 6:16

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Ahab has the unenviable distinction of being known as the worst king to sit upon the throne of Israel. He owes much of that distinction to the influence of his wife Jezebel who stirred him up to do evil. 1 Kings 21:25-26. Nevertheless it would be wrong to suggest that Jezebel was responsible for all of Ahab's evils. The record clearly reveals Ahab as a strong and determined individual who did not lack either courage or enterprise. Couple that with the education and guidance he received from his father Omri "the statute-maker" and it is obvious that Ahab would have been an evil king like his father without the influence of Jezebel. She had the effect of moving him to far greater evils than he might have committed by himself and was responsible for the introduction of a new and destructive element that reduced Israel to a stronghold of Paganism.

The inspired Historian almost appears incredulous as he penned the words of 1 Kings 16:31, "And it came to pass as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him", Baal worship had been eradicated from the land by Israel under Joshua, and though it had reappeared for brief periods during the times of the Judges it had virtually become extinct during Israel's history as a monarchy. Now the god of the Amorites and Canaanites was once again firmly entrenched in the land from which his former devotees had been forcibly evicted. It is for this reason that reference is made to the fulfillment of a prophecy made by Joshua, in the record of Ahab's reign. 1 Kings 16:34.

Jericho was the first city to fall to Israel and as such it represented the fall of the entire land to Israel. With its fall the doom

of Baal and his devotees was signalled. It is significant that Jericho was rebuilt during the reign of Ahab and that reference to it should be placed immediately after the condemnation of Ahab's vile Baal worship and evil idolatries. We are being informed in a curious way that as far as Yahweh was concerned the Amorites and Canaanites were once again in control of the land of Canaan. They were there in the form of Ahab and his house, and the Baal worshippers of Israel.

Considerable space is devoted to the reign of Ahab in the record of the Kings, largely because of his association with Elijah the prophet and Jehoshaphat king of Judah. In all the accounts considered in these notes he emerges as a man fixed in the ways of idolatry and wickedness and only occasionally and momentarily moved to recognition of Yahweh and pangs of conscience under the influence of Elijah. Despite the many opportunities given to Ahab to reform and the miracles performed to convince him of Yahweh's existence he stubbornly continued in his evil ways. Only the condemnation of his house delivered by Elijah in Naboth's vineyard produced any sign of remorse in Ahab but even this was shortlived.

Ahab died by the divine hand, fully deserving the reputation he had as Israel's worst king. The manner of his death and the washing of his chariot in the pool of the harlots was a fitting end for such a man. He had given himself over to Jezebel the harlot of Zidon - in the end, his life blood was washed into the cess-pool that harboured all the filth and corruption of the very priestesses he had installed to conduct his immoral Baal worship in Samaria.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF AHAB'S REIGN

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession in Asa's 38th year	16:29	
His great evil and idolatry	16:30-33	
Jericho rebuilt in his reign	16:34	
Elijah appears suddenly - declares drought	17:1-7	
Elijah with the widow of Zarephath	17:8-24	
Elijah meets Obadiah and Ahab	18:1-16	
The contest on Mt. Carmel	18:17-40	
Elijah declares approach of rain	18:41-46	
Elijah flees from Jezebel to Horeb	19:1-18	
Elijah calls Elisha to follow him	19:19-21	
Attacked by Benhadad of Syria	20:1-12	
Syria defeated with divine help	20:13-21	
Divine warning that Syria will return	20:22-27	
An assurance of God's help	20:28-30	
Spares Benhadad and honours him	20:31-34	
Sorely rebuked by a prophet	20:35-43	
Seeks to possess Naboth's vineyard	21:1-4	
Jezebel intervenes - death of Naboth	21:5-14	
Takes possession of Naboth's vineyard	21:15-16	
Elijah condemns Ahab's house	21:17-24	
Humbles himself - Yahweh's mercy revealed	21:25-29	
Jehoshaphat makes an alliance with him	22:1-4	18:1-3
Cracks appear in the alliance	22:5-14	18:4-11
The prophet Micaiah called	22:13-14	18:12-13
The prophecy of Micaiah	22:15-28	18:14-27
Micaiah thrown into prison	22:26-28	18:25-27

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
The battle at Ramoth-Gilead	22:29-33	18:28-32
Smitten by an arrow - dies	22:34-36	18:33-34
Burial in Samaria	22:37	
The dogs lick his blood	22:38	
Final summary	22:39-40	

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### SUMMARY OF REIGN AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 1 Kings 16:29-34

V.30 - "above all that were before him" - Roth.-"did more wickedly than all that were before him." He even outstripped his father in wickedness, V.25.

V.31 - "light thing" - QALAL - to be light (easy, trifling). Roth.-" as though it had been too light a thing."

"served Baal" - ABAD - to work, to serve (enslave). Baal means lord - the Zidonians worshipped Ashtoreth, 11 Kings 23:13; the god of sensual desire.

V.32 - "in the house of Baal" - Ahab made a home for Baal in Samaria and established a place of worship for Baal.

Baal - "master, lord", a male deity - son of El; the father of gods, according to Pagan myths. Associated with agriculture and was said to give increase to family and field, flocks and herds. Also identified with Hadad the storm god whose voice was heard in the thunder that brought rain so essential to crops. The worship of this cult included animal sacrifice, ritualistic meals and licentious dances. Near the rock altar was a sacred pillar and the symbol of Asherah to symbolise human fertility. High places were attended by male and female prostitutes. Baal worship had a subtle attraction for Israelites bound by a strict moral and religious code. In many ways its rituals were similar to the Law of Moses - all that was required was to lower moral standards and with "minor adjustments" they could accept Baal. Israel had been well prepared for Ahab's new worship - 62 years of apostate rulers who pursued Jeroboam's corrupt policies had completely demoralised the people. In fact the new and rising generations had known nothing else but Jeroboam's calf worship.

V.33 - "a grove" - ASHERAH - female deity, the consort of Baal - represented by an unclothed woman with a serpent in one hand and a lily in the other. (serpent - represents fecundity and the lily - sexual attraction) Asherah was symbolised by a tree or pole set beside the Massebah (symbol of Baal). Asherah specialised in sexual love and war - her temples were centres of "legalised" vice. At Byblos (north of Sidon) recent excavation has revealed that Asherah revelled in bloodshed and immoral lust. This is significant in view of the physical antics of Jezebel's prophets of Baal before Elijah on Mt. Carmel. 1 Kings 18:26-28.

"provoke...anger" - one word - KAAC - trouble, by implication to grieve, rage, be indignant.

V.34 - "Hiel" - "living of God". From the root "to revive".

"Bethel-ite" - "from house of God".

"Abiram" - "Father of height (lofty)".

"Segub" - "aloft". From the root to be lofty especially inaccessible. It fulfils the prophecy of Josh.6:26 - the fall of Jericho symbolised Israel's triumph over the inhabitants of Canaan with their false worship. This



significant rebuilding of Jericho in Ahab's day coincided with the introduction into Israel of Baal worship in its worst form - Jericho was "revived" by a Bethel-ite. It was at Bethel that Jeroboam had instituted the apostasy now fully developed. The idolatry of Canaan which was removed by Israel had now been fully restored. 1 Chron.5:25.

### THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF ELIJAH 1 Kings 17:1-7

V.1 - "Elijah the Tishbite" - "Yahweh is El (Power)". Tishbite - "recourse". A town of Naphtali. His history covers 9 chapters in Kings, 1 Kings 17 - 11 Kings 3. His name is mentioned 69 times in the Old Testament and 30 in the New Testament. For a description of Elijah's appearance see 11 Kings 1:7-8.

"of the inhabitants of Gilead" - inhabitants - TOSHAB - a dweller, resident alien, sojourner. Gilead - "heap of testimony". From the root "something rolled". Notable characters arose out of Gilead - Jair, Judges 10:3; Jephthah, Judges 11:1; Barzillai, 11 Sam.17:27; Sons of Machir, Judges 5:14. For the family history see Josh.17:1 (father a man of war). It was an area 60 miles long and 20 miles wide, extending from the Sea of Galilee to the upper end of the Dead Sea. A land of rolling hills, fertile and crowned with forests, Gen.37:25; Num.32:1. An area that was particularly suitable for grazing of flocks and herds, Deut.3:12-17. The occupants were hardy and tough fighting men - even today the Arab name Jala'ad "to be rough" describes the terrain.

"Yahweh God of Israel liveth" - Elijah sets forth Yahweh as the "living" God as opposed to Baal. The enormity of Ahab's sin was that while his predecessors had maintained a facade of worship that had some connection with Yahweh, Ahab had abandoned Him altogether and returned to the gods of the Canaanites.

"before whom I stand" - used 4 times by Elijah and Elisha. It clearly underlines the contrast between Ahab and Elijah.

"shall not be dew nor rain" - Heavy dew in hot summer months was as good as a light drizzle, in higher areas. Rains fell from October / Nov. through to March. The Canaanites attributed rain to Baal the god of agriculture and fertility. Yahweh through Elijah (Yah is power) was going to show Ahab how powerless Baal was in a land that relied heavily upon regular rain - Deut.11:11. This drought was to be typical of the drought of the Word in Israel - Amos 8:11.

"these years" - 3½ years, 1 Kings 18:1 and Luke 4:25.

V.3 - "brook Cherith" - "a cut". "cutting" (Gray). In the sense of, to separate, divide. A wadi running into Jordan from Gilead opposite Bethshean - Elijah's home territory.

"before Jordan" - Roth. "faceth Jordan". Jordan because of its serpentine course and characteristics was associated with the "flesh".

V.4 - "ravens" - OREB - A raven (dusky colour). They were unclean, Lev. 11:13-15. See Job 38:41. They were scavengers and had difficulty feeding themselves - this was a lesson to Elijah that Yahweh could provide even through the weak and despised. These circumstances prepared Elijah for his sojourn with the widow of Zarephath - typified by the ravens.

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH 1 Kings 17:8-24

V.9 - "Arise" - Elijah moves at the impulse of the Spirit Word.

"Zarephath" - "refinement, to refine metal", "place of the smelting furnace". A distance of 100 miles in heat and intense drought.

"Zidon" - "catching fish" - hometown of Jezebel, 1 Kings 16:31. The widow was poor, despised, without identity or means of sustenance and on top of all this an unclean Gentile - a symbol of the class amongst whom Elijah's great work was to be done, right under the nose of Jezebel. For Christ's comment on the widow woman see Luke 4:25-26.

V.11 - "Bring me, I pray thee" - Immediate response to Elijah's request - Elijah follows with an additional request, which was a severe test of faith.

V.12 - "As Yahweh thy God" - She evidently knew him as a man of God, hence her ready response.

"handful of meal ... a little oil" - The ingredients of a meal offering, Lev.2:1-2. Flour, the product of wheat spoke of a man's labours by the motivating power of the Word (oil). Offered in conjunction with a burnt offering (total dedication) it signified an understanding that profession must be matched by performance. It was also a reminder that God possesses and provides all - therefore He deserves the best of it. The decision before the woman was to either deny Elijah (Yah is power) and live in the strength of the flour a little longer but die a cruel and slow death, OR make a "burnt offering" of herself and offer to Elijah a "meal offering" in conjunction with it thus committing herself into Yahweh's hands. Her faith was equal to the task and she was sustained throughout the drought. There was no famine of the Word in her house as there was in Ahab's.

REVIVAL OF THE WIDOW'S SON 1 Kings 17:17-24

V.18 - "What have I to do with thee" - Roth. "What have I in common with thee, O man of God". She interpreted this tragedy as punishment for her past sins and being in Elijah's presence only magnified them and increased her sense of guilt. This is not the language of recrimination, but of despair.

V.19 - "loft" - a second story room (on the roof).

V.21 - "stretched himself upon the child three times" - 3 is a complete number and also the number of resurrection. This is complete identification with the dead boy.

V.22 - "revived" - CHAYAH - to live.

V.23 - "chamber" - same word as "loft" v19.

V.24 - "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God" - This miracle was a testimony of Elijah's authority; he was a type of Christ, "believe me for the works sake" John 14:11. The experience of Elijah at Zarephath was an example of the great work that could be done amongst the humble, insignificant and outcast of the nation in the "backyard" of Jezebel and in the heat of the "smelting furnace". The strange fact was that faith had been found in a former Gentile idolator, who had turned to Yahweh.

# ELIJAH MEETS OBADIAH AND AHAB 1 Kings 18:1-16 Ahab of Israel

- V.1 - "many days.....in the third year" - 3½ years, Luke 4:25.  
"I will send rain" - Roth. "that I may...". Conditional upon Yahweh's Word through Elijah, 17:1. Rain - symbol of the Word, Deut.32:1-2, Isa.55:10-11, Psalms.72:6. Ahab had been shown literally what happens spiritually when there is a famine of the Word, Amos 8:11.
- V.2 - "Samaria" - A new name for Israel - Ahab's regime had changed its character so much.
- V.3 - "Obadiah" - Heb. "the servant of Yahweh".  
"the governor of his house" - AL - above, over, upon. He was the royal chamberlain (Gray).  
"feared Yahweh greatly" - "feared"; YARE - to revere. Greatly, MEOD - vehemently; by implication wholly.
- V.4 - "Jezebel cut off the prophets of Yahweh" - Indicates a purge by Jezebel of any opposition in Israel to Baal worship. She then replaced them by prophets of her own choice, verse 19.  
"by fifty in a cave" - Roth. & Youngs Lit. have "caves". The sense could be that he hid them fifty in each cave; to transfer fifty in and out of a cave and replace them would only jeopardise the safety of all. Perhaps the cave was a temporary hiding place on the route to safety.
- V.5 - "Ahab said unto Obadiah" - Indication of Obadiah's influence - he went forth with equal authority to Ahab to secure fodder.
- V.7 - "knew" - NAKAR - to scrutinise, ie. look intently at (with recognition implied). See 1 Kings 17:1. Roth. - "Now art thou my lord Elijah."
- V.8 - "I am, go tell thy lord" - Roth. - "I, go say to thy lord, here is Elijah."
- V.9 - "that thou wouldest deliver thy servant" - Obadiah's fear of Ahab is a reflection on the tyranny now current in Israel - life and death rested on the caprice of the king.
- V.10 - "sent to seek thee" - Testimony to Ahab's utter desperation; demonstrated by a frantic search for Elijah in adjoining countries - underlined by his securing of an oath from them.
- V.12 - "it shall come to pass" - Obadiah was very astute and also possessed a healthy faith. There is clear evidence of his belief in Yahweh in these words.  
"from my youth" - He grew up during the reigns of Baasha and Omri and yet feared Yahweh.
- V.15 - "Yahweh Sabaoth" - Lit. "He who will be manifested in hosts." Different to 1 Kings 17:1. A war was now pending between Yahweh and Baal and between Yahweh's representative and Baal's prophets.
- V.16 - "So Obadiah went to meet Ahab" - Obadiah accepted Elijah's oath without question - another difference to 1 Kings 17:1; on this second encounter Ahab comes to Elijah.

THE CONTEST ON MT. CARMEL 1 Kings 18:17-40

V.17 - "Art thou he that troubleth Israel" - Youngs Lit. "Art thou he - the troubler of Israel".

"troubler" - AKAR - to make water turbid, to stir, or disturb. Josh.7:25, 1 Chron.2:7.

V.18 - "troubled" - AKAR - see note v17.

"thou and thy and thy father's house" - See Mic.6:16, Omri's statutes - Ahab's works.

"followed" - YALAK ACHAR - walk behind.

"Baalim" - A Canaanite deity - Ahab had compounded and worsened Jeroboam's apostasy. At least Jeroboam had sought to represent Israel's God by a golden calf - Ahab had rejected Yahweh altogether in favour of Baal.

V.19 - "Carmel" - A planted field, garden, by implication productive, fruitful. Noted for luxuriant vegetation due to the receipt of early and heavy rains - naturally therefore a good site for Baal worship as he was attributed with bringing rain. Phoenician seafarers also associated Baal with prominent headlands such as Mt. Carmel.

"prophets of the groves" - ASHERAH - These did not come. Jezebel was not uncertain of her gods though Israel and Ahab might be. She was the one who attempted to destroy Yahweh's prophets. These 400 were virtually Jezebel's 'harem' in view of the immoral rites associated with their worship.

V.21 - "halt ye between two opinions" - Roth. "How long are ye limping on the two divided opinions" (margin - "as on unequal legs"). Gray - "hobble on two crutches".

"opinion" - CA-IPH - divided (in mind).

"answered him not a word" - They stood silently self-condemned - among them perhaps were some who sympathised with Elijah but in the presence of Ahab and the prophets of Baal they remained silent.

V.22 - "I, even I only remain a prophet of Yahweh" - Roth. "I am left". Gray, "Myself alone". What about the 100 prophets of v13 - this is an insight into the state of Elijah's mind at this time. In events to come Yahweh sets out to reveal to Elijah that there were others beside himself who were faithful.

V.23 - "bullocks" - Used for sin and burnt offerings. As these were cut in pieces and placed upon the altar to be burnt whole they were to be burnt offerings, Lev.1.

V.26 - "from morning even until noon" - 3 to 4 hours.

"O, Baal hear us" - Roth. "O' Baal answer us". Hear - ANAH - to eye, to heed, ie. to pay attention.

"answered" - ANAH - same word as "hear".

"And they leaped upon the altar" - "leaped" - PACAH - to hop, ie. to skip over. Also literally to limp. RSV. "And they limped about the altar".

V.27 - "noon" - The sun at its zenith - the heat was great - now was the most propitious time for Baal to answer his distressed prophets.

"mocked" - HATHAL - to deride. Youngs Lit. "play".

"Cry aloud" - QARA - to call (to accost a person). Roth. "cry aloud". The idea of the word is to, "butt in".

"talking" - SIYACH - a contemplating by implication utterance. Roth. "he hath a meditation".

"pursuing" - SIYG - to withdraw into a private place. Roth. "an occasion to retire".

Elijah heaps sarcasm upon Baal by mentioning things quite foreign to the practices of Yahweh. Isa.40:28.

V.28 - "cut themselves after their manner" - Roth. "after their custom". Blood the vital essence was part of their ritual to invoke Baal to hear and grant their petitions. (It may have been imitative magic - by the liberal effusion of the vital essence of life they sought a similar effusion of rain from Baal - Gray.)

V.29 - "they prophesied" - R.S.V. - "They raved on."

"offering of the evening sacrifice" - Obviously written by prophets of Yahweh - it was a way of marking time with them. It is significant that Elijah's sacrifice was accepted at this time of day, 3pm.

"Offering" is the word ALAH - to ascend.

"neither voice....answer....regarded" - QESHEB - hearkening; root, to prick up the ears. R.S.V.-"but there was no voice, no one answered, no one heeded." The sense of this passage is gained by noticing its accumulative force; "There was no voice because no one answered and no one answered because no one was listening."

V.30 - "Come near unto me" - There was to be no trickery - doubtless many had tired of Baal's prophets by this time and had withdrawn and dispersed a little. Elijah calls them near again.

"broken down" - HARAC - to pull down, destroy. R.S.V.-"thrown down."

V.32 - "trench" - TE ALAH - a channel (for irrigation).

V.33 - "barrels" - KAD - a pail or earthenware jar. The water was obviously taken from the sea which was only a short distance away.

V.36 - "the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice" - 3 pm - Elijah's simple prayer was deliberately brief in contrast to that of the prophets of Baal so as to emphasise Yahweh's ready response.

V.37 - "that thou hast turned their heart back again" - Roth.-"so shalt thou thyself have turned their heart back again."

V.38 - "the fire of Yahweh fell" - The fire consumes the sacrifice, the altar and the water - symbolic of total acceptance of Elijah and his sacrifice; cp. Lev. 9:24.

V.39 - "Yahweh he is God" - Virtually "Elijah, Elijah." (the prophet's name means "Yah is El")

V.40 - "Take the prophets.....they took them" - "Take" and "took" are the same word TAPHAS - to manipulate, ie. to seize.

"Kishon" - Heb. winding; ie. like a serpent. Symbol of the flesh. Elijah

completed the process commenced by the prophets themselves, verse 28 - he shed all their blood.

V.41 - "there is a sound....of rain" - R.S.V.-"there is a sound of the rushing of rain." Yahweh had been vindicated - Baal was temporarily disgraced in the minds of the people, and now there was to be further evidence of Yahweh's power.

V.42 - "Ahab went up...Elijah went up" - Perhaps Ahab had imposed a fast upon himself due to the shortage of food in Israel - as an example! Elijah's ascent probably means that the site of the contest was on the side of the Carmel range. It may be however, that having killed Baal's prophets by Kishon he now climbs to the top of the range again.

"cast himself" - Roth.-"bowed himself".

V.43 - "Go again seven times" - Yahweh was to fulfil the covenant (seven) of 1 Kings 18:1.

V.44 - "like a man's hand" - Youngs Lit. -"Lo, a little thickness as the palm of a man is coming up out of the sea."

The word little is QATON - diminutive. "Cloud" is the word AB - darkness (density). The young man saw a small dark cloud rising out of the horizon which to him was about the size of a man's hand - Elijah knew it was the sign of oncoming rain.

"prepare" - ACAR - to yoke or hitch, to fasten. Ahab's "faith" in Elijah's word was to be tested. No doubt he was absolutely stunned by the events of the day.

V.45 - "Jezreel" - "God will sow". Baal was Ahab's god. Baal was the god of agriculture, but he had failed to provide. Yahweh would "sow" for only he could provide rain. Connect the context of verses 45 & 46 with 11 Kings 3:14-27.

### ELIJAH'S FLIGHT TO HOREB 1 Kings 19:1-18

V.1 - "Ahab told Jezebel" - The record presents Ahab as being dominated by his wife - though he was deeply impressed by the events on Carmel he seems to have fully disclosed all to Jezebel without manifesting his real feelings.

V.2 - "Jezebel sent a messenger" - This was possibly only a threat, as it is unusual to warn an intended victim of his impending demise.

V.3 - "Beersheba" - "Well of an oath". 100 miles south of Jezreel. The southern extremity of Judah, 1 Sam. 3:20. Elijah avoided Judah because of Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab by marrying his son Jehoram to Athaliah the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, 11 Chron. 18:1.

V.4 - "juniper tree" - ROTHEM - spanish broom. A tree with a delicate white flower having a maroon centre - 8 to 9 feet high. Its roots provided food - Job 30:3-4.

"requested" - SHAEL - to inquire.

"It is enough" - Roth.- "enough now".

"my fathers" - Prophets who had likewise failed to convert the nation from apostasy.

V.6 - "a cake baken....a cruse of water" - Reminiscent of 1 Kings 17:10-13.

V.8 - "forty days and forty nights" - See Moses experiences, Deut. 9:8-9, 18. Connect Christ - Luke 4:2.

"Horeb" - "Dryness, desert". A lower part or peak on northern approach to Sinai. 200 miles from Beersheba.

"the mount of God" - Horeb's history provides the reasons for Elijah's long journey. Here in solitude where Yahweh had revealed himself to Moses and given the Law, he could feel secure and be able to confide in his God. Elijah felt isolated - he considered that he alone had been faithful to Yahweh and he sought the solitude of Horeb's heights as Moses had done many years earlier.

V.9 - "cave" - Same word as 1 Kings 18:4. Note that context, as now the situation is reversed - Elijah is a fugitive for slaying the prophets of Baal and rebuilding the altar.

V.10 - "jealous" - QANA - zealous.

"Lord God of hosts" - To Ahab he had used the title "Yahweh Elohim of Israel", 1 Kings 17:1; to Obadiah, "Yahweh Tzva'oth", 1 Kings 18:15; now he combines the two titles.

"forsaken" - AZAB - to relinquish.

"thrown down thine altars and slain thy prophets" - Elijah had reversed this situation - 1 Kings 18:30-32, 40.

"I, even I only" - Youngs Lit. - "I am left, I by myself".

"they seek" - Jezebel sought him; not all Israel.

V.11 - "Yahweh passed by" - Reminiscent of Ex. 34:6.

"rent....brake in pieces" - MEPAREQ & MESABBER - "rending" and "shattering"

V.12 - "still small voice" - Roth. - "the voice of a gentle whisper."

"Still" is Heb. DEMAMAH - quiet. "Small" is DAQ - crushed, ie. small or thin. There had been no response by fire or by voice from Ahab's god - 1 Kings 18:29.

There is a direct contrast between the loud, boisterous destructive elements and the small quiet voice, in order to teach Elijah a great lesson.

V.13 - "it was so, when Elijah heard it" - Elijah responded to the still small voice but was overawed by the violent elements - a lesson to him that effective work is through the quiet influence of God's word. Notice Elijah had been outside the cave, verse 11, but had retreated into the cave in fear. Now he emerges in response to the "still small voice". The awe-inspiring manifestation of the power of God had the same effect upon Elijah as the events upon Mt. Carmel had upon the people of Israel. They were struck with fear - what was now needed was the "still small voice" of God's word to cause them to respond and draw near unto Yahweh. This had been revealed by the sending of rain immediately after the contest on Carmel (rain is a symbol of the doctrine of Yahweh, Deut. 32:1-2); but where was Elijah? Not in Israel teaching those ready to respond to Yahweh's word, but sitting in solitude on a mountain 300 miles away. No wonder the the voice of the Spirit enquired, "What doest thou here, Elijah."



"wrapped his face in his mantle" - A mark of humility - typical of Israel's state of mind after the events on Carmel. Like Elijah they were now susceptible to the voice of Yahweh, but Elijah was not there to deliver it or teach them.

"there came a voice" - Contrast verse 9.

V.15 - "Go, return on thy way" - A divine rebuke - there was work to be done in Israel. This journey to Horeb was the first time Elijah had done something in the record without the impulse and direction of the Spirit and divine command - note 1 Kings 17:1-2, 8-9, 18:1,12,46.

"Hazeal" - "God has seen".

V.16 - "Jehu" - "Yah is he".

"Nimshi" - "extricated", from the root, "to pull out".

"Elisha" - "to whom God is salvation".

"Shaphat" - "judge" or judgement.

"Abel-meholah" - "meadow of dancing".

V.17 - "the sword of Hazeal...Jehu...Elisha" - The divine messengers to destroy the wicked in Israel like the wind, earthquake and fire on Mt. Horeb but which would be followed by Elisha's work of disseminating the "still small voice" in Israel.

V.18 - "Yet I have left me" - Roth. and RV. - "Yet will I leave remaining in Israel". 7,000 remained faithful to Yahweh. A strong rejoinder to Elijah's argument that he was alone. Seven is the covenant number - a thousand is typical of a multitude. Yahweh is saying that He had preserved a multitude who were faithful to His covenant. Cited - Rom.11:4.

### THE ANOINTING OF ELISHA 1 Kings 19:19-21

V.19 - "plowing with twelve yoke of oxen" - Capitalising on the recent rain. This was collective plowing - 12 Yoke representing the 12 tribes of Israel, cp. the context of Luke 9:62.

"his mantle" - See 1 Kings 2:13-14; a symbol of Elijah's spirit and power.

V.20 - "Go back again" - Gray, "Go, but (remember) what I have done to you". Comp. Bible, "What is the meaning of what I did". The emphasis is upon the great responsibilities and uncompromising nature of the call. Cp. Luke 9:62.

V.21 - "took a yoke of oxen and slew them" - A burnt offering using animals and instruments of past occupation - now he would dedicate his life to cultivating men's minds.

"went after" - Elijah had not stopped, Luke 9:62, (note the frequency of Elijah's name in Luke 9).

### CONFLICT WITH BENHADAD OF SYRIA 1 Kings 20:1-43

V.1 - "went up and besieged Samaria" - Proof to Elijah of Yahweh's power to incapacitate Ahab and Jezebel. A large confederacy of 32 Kings some of whom he (Ahab) had approached seeking Elijah, 1 Kings 18:10.

"Benhadad" - "son of Hadad" - Hadad was the Canaanite storm god, "responsible" for storms and rain. Ahab was now to suffer ironically at the hands of the

'son' of his own chosen god - Baal.

V.4 - "I am thine, and all that I have" - Ahab was politically astute - accedes to demands with a view to subsequently amicably reducing them. If he had met these demands he would have been relieved of his greatest liability - Jezebel.

V.6 - "they shall search thine house" - Demands extended - made virtually unconditional.

V.10 - "if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls" - Benhadad threatens to reduce Samaria to dust so that there would not be enough for his army to carry away in handfuls.

V.11 - "Let not him that girdeth on his harness" - Hebrew aphorism - like the English, "Don't count your chickens before they hatch".

V.12 - "pavilions" - CUKKAH - A hut or lair. Benhadad's drinking with confederate kings deprived his army of leadership, v16.

V.13 - "came" - NAGASH - to be or come near. This emphasises Elijah's failure to recognise existence of other faithful men in Israel - here was one. (1 Kings 19:10). Ahab was to receive further proof of Yahweh's power to save.

V.14 - "Who shall order the battle" - Ahab's abrupt answer rings of doubt.

"order" - ACAR - to yoke or hitch, bind or tie. Roth. "Who shall begin the war".

V.15 - "seven thousand" - An interesting reflection on 1 Kings 19:18 - this number was found in Samaria.

V.22 - "Go, strengthen thyself" - Ahab warned to strengthen himself against a fresh Syrian campaign within the year. Yahweh's assistance of Ahab can only be interpreted as an attempt to turn his heart from idolatry and to produce conditions conducive to Elisha's work.

V.23 - "gods of the hills" - So Baal was (see note 1 Kings 18:19) - but Yahweh was not only God of the hills but of heaven and earth.

V.26 - "Aphek" - "fortress". Most authorities seem to place this Aphek on the highway from Israel to Damascus 4 miles east of the Sea of Galilee.

V.27 - "were numbered, and were all present" - Roth. "were numbered and provisioned".

"two little flocks of kids" - "goats", (Roth, Youngs Lit.). See the notes on Abijah for comparison of armed forces.

V.28 - "a man of God" - May have been the same prophet as v13, but reads as a different person - there were more than 'one' of Yahweh's servants to be found in Israel contrary to Elijah's assessment. The sole purpose of Yahweh's support for Ahab was to uphold his power before the Gentiles in

an attempt to convert Ahab to him. He would not help him for any other reason.

V.30 - "inner chamber" - Roth. "a chamber within a chamber". The son of Hadad was virtually entombed.

V.31 - "merciful" - CHESED - The word used to describe Yahweh's characteristic of mercy in Ex. 34:6. Even in wicked kings and in reprobates like Ahab some of the ameliorating influences of the Truth were observable. The pagan Gentiles by contrast did not know what CHESED was.

"ropes upon our heads" - ie. like captives who were roped together - thus signifying complete surrender.

V.32 - "he is my brother" - In a sense he was - Ahab's god was Baal; akin to Hadad, god of storms. A foolish mistake by the shortsighted and faithless Ahab. There was absolutely no principle in Ahab to govern his actions.

V.33 - "the men did diligently observe" - R.S.V. - "Now the men were watching for an omen, and they quickly took it up from him and said, Yes your brother Benhadad."

"catch" - CHALAT - to snatch at. Here were desperate men prepared to grasp at any straw for survival - they were shocked by Ahab's conciliatory reply. Stunned, they merely repeated his words, affirming them.

"into the chariot" - This was hardly the place for a defeated enemy king - riding in the victors chariot as an honoured guest.

V.34 - "thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus" - Benhadad in amazement makes promises of reparation and recognition for Ahab. Ahab prized worldly recognition above divine approbation. This appealed to him greatly. "covenant" - Ahab made peace with the world. Essentially there was no difference between Ahab and Benhadad - they were both men of the flesh, hence Ahab saw no incongruity in this.

V.35 - Another obscure prophet emerges - see verse 13 & 28 and note the different way these men are described in the record. cp. note verse 28.

V.43 - "heavy" - CAR - vexatious, fretful.

"displeased" - ZAEPPH - angry; root, to boil up. The self-willed and hardhearted Ahab did not take kindly to rebuff as 1 Kings 21:4 reveals. Note that the same words are used in that place.

### THE INCIDENT OF NABOTH'S VINEYARD 1 Kings 21:1-16

V.1 - "Naboth" - "Fruits". In the record he is revealed as a righteous man - one of those referred to in 1 Kings 19:18.

"Jezreelite" - "God sows". It is significant that next door to Ahab's palace God had sown and a man had brought forth "fruit".

"vineyard" - See symbol of Ezek. 15 and Isa. 5.

"hard by" - ETSEL - joining; a side. This vineyard was in Jezreel, not the capital Samaria.

V.2 - "garden of herbs" - YARAQ - a vegetable. Ahab proposed to convert the vineyard into a vegetable garden for his pleasure - see principle of Deut. 11:10. He proposes two alternatives, both of which were unacceptable to Naboth, thus revealing Ahab's complete ignorance of the principles of the

Law. An Israelite could not swap or sell his inheritance. To Ahab one vineyard was as good as another - he simply could not grasp the principle involved.

V.3 - "Yahweh forbid it me" - Proof that Naboth was a righteous man - both Obadiah and Naboth were close to the king and there were three prophets, known as such by him; how could Elijah claim, "I, I only am left."

"inheritance of my fathers" - This law was clearly laid down - Num. 36:7, Lev. 25:23. The king was not to take another's inheritance. This was implicit in the Law and was later expressed by Ezekiel, chap. 46:18. Naboth was one of those 7000 men of faith and principle in Israel.

V.4 - "heavy and displeased" - Cp. 1 Kings 20:43. "Fretful and angry." "laid him down" - Ahab was sulking like a spoilt child denied the gratification of his whims and desires.

V.5 - "Why is thy spirit so sad" - Youngs Lit. - "What is this, thy spirit sulky...."

"sad" - CAR - peevish, vexatious; verse 4 and 20:43.

V.7 - "Dost thou now govern" - Moffatt - "And are you not in command of Israel's kingdom." He was but Jezebel was the real ruler. She proves this in the following events.

"I will give thee" - She had no scruples at all. At least Ahab, though ignorant of the principles involved had succumbed to the firm stand of Naboth.

V.8 - "in his city" - Naboth was a prominent and well known man - his own acquaintances were incited to treachery by Jezebel. A type of Christ's sufferings, Zech.13:6.

"Ahab's name" - Ahab's orders but the nobles were quite aware of their real origin - note how they reported their deeds to Jezebel, v14.

V.9 - "Proclaim a fast" - Done on occasions of national introspection and repentance, Joel 1:14, 1 Sam.7:6.

"on high" - ROSH - the head or at the head. Josephus suggests that he was of an illustrious family and was given a position at the head of the people so as to be in the limelight and hence utterly humiliated and discredited, when false witnesses arose to accuse him. This was real treachery - exalt Naboth so that his fall would be sudden and great.

V.10 - "set two men" - Roth. "now let two reckless men take their seats before him". The false accusers were placed - Jezebel was shrewd enough to conform to the requirements of the Law to give a veneer of legality to her treachery, Deut.17:6.

"God and the king" - These trumped up charges of blasphemy were the same ones levelled at Christ, John 19:1-12.

V.11 - "did as Jezebel had sent unto them" - The elders and nobles seem to have had no compunctions - this emphasises the power of Jezebel and the fear engendered by her cruelty and ruthlessness toward her enemies.

V.13 - "children of Belial" - Heb. "without profit, worthlessness". The

plan worked perfectly - Naboth was discredited in the eyes of all the people and stoned. The record is silent about anything Naboth may have said in his own defence, doubtless he was given no chance.

V.15 - "take possession of the vineyard of Naboth" - Jezebel had given everything the veneer of legality but still the Law thwarted any legal right of Ahab to Naboth's vineyard - it provided for the next of kin to raise up seed upon his inheritance if he had none. Deut.25:5. Naboth had relatives to whom his inheritance would now pass but this did not bother Jezebel or Ahab - they killed his sons, 11 Kings 9:26.

### ELIJAH CONDEMNS AHAB'S HOUSE 1 Kings 21:17-29

V.18 - "Arise, go down" - Ahab was also rising up to 'go down' to Naboth's vineyard, v16.

V.19 - "Hast thou killed" - Roth. "Hast thou committed murder and also taken possession".

"in the place" - This was fulfilled in the life and death of Jehoram, 11 Kings 9:25-26.

V.20 - "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy" - A significant change from 1 Kings 18:17 - now the situation was completely reversed. The language indicates that Ahab was aware that he had gravely sinned, Jezebel on the other hand did not have a conscience at all.

"sold thyself" - MAKAR - to sell, surrender into slavery. Ahab had sold himself to Jezebel v25.

V.21 - "shut up and left" - ASUR & AZAB - probably "helpless or hindered" and "abandoned or destitute". Roth. "whether shut up or left at large".

V.22 - "like the house of Jeroboam" - same as 1 Kings 14:10, 16:3-4.

V.23 - "dogs" - KELEB - to yelp, or else to attack. A dog (by euphemism, a male prostitute). See Psa.22:16, 59:6; Isa.66:3; Prov.26:11.

"wall" - CHEYL - an intrenchment (margin, ditch). Youngs Lit. "by the bulwark".

V.25 - "there was none like unto Ahab" - parenthesis in RSV. from v25 -26 is correct. This comment from the inspired recorder is inserted to underline Ahab's sins - it is an exclamation. Youngs Lit. "surely there hath been none!"

"sell" - MAKAR - to sell, surrender to slavery (to Jezebel).

"stirred up" - CUWTH - to prick, ie. to stimulate. From the root word, briars, thorns, Josh. 23:12-13; Num.33:55.

V.26 - "abominably" - TA'AB - to loathe, detest.

"as did the Amorites" - Refer to the note in 1 Kings 16:34.

V.27 - "went softly" - AT - to move softly or gently. Ahab had some conscience - Jezebel's was seared with a hot iron.

V.29 - "humbleth" - KANA - to bend the knee, hence to humiliate - root word for "Canaan". This was not a repentant or reforming humility

but the humility of mortification and exposure. It was brought on by fear and trepidation, for Ahab knew that Elijah's words would be fulfilled. This amply demonstrates Yahweh's great mercy - he mitigates the judgement by changing the time of its fulfillment. With this magnanimity in view we who seek to serve Yahweh should be encouraged to strive to find mercy whatever our failures and misgivings. Compare the spirit of Psa.130 and 11 Pet.3:9.

## AHAB and JEHOSHAPHAT

### THE FATAL ALLIANCE 11 Chron. 18:1-3 (1 Kings 22:1-34)

V.1 - "riches and honour in abundance" - The source of Jehoshaphat's failure - a certain self-sufficiency and self-confidence had developed through prosperity and universal respect of his greatness. Success had blunted his awareness of the dangers involved in undertaking relations with Israel - a pointed contrast to 11 Chron. 17:1.

"joined affinity" - CHATHAN - primary root, to give (a daughter) away in marriage, hence to contract affinity by marriage. Same word used of Solomon contracting affinity with Pharaoh - 1 Kings 3:1. Used of Saul's ploy to ensnare David - 1 Sam.18:21. Most significantly used in the Law forbidding marriage with the alien, Deut.7:3 (note context). The initiative was from Jehoshaphat, not because of a position of weakness, but of strength - Ahab whose kingdom was desperately weak quickly exploited it. The marriage was between Jehoram, Jehoshaphat's son and Athaliah, Ahab's daughter.

Jehoram - "Yahweh raised". Athaliah - "Yah has constrained" From the root "to compress", "constringent".

These names are a story in themselves. Chapter 17 shows how Jehoshaphat rose high in the things of God; chapter 18 reveals how his reforms and ambitions were dashed. Yahweh had warned of the results of alliance with aliens - the Truth's development was held back and constrained.

V.2 - "after certain years he went down" - Note the margin, "at the end of years" - marks a crucial period in Jehoshaphat's life. He went 'down' in every sense of the word, both literally and spiritually.

"to Ahab to Samaria" - A sorry and pathetic situation. Note v9 - He sits in the gate of Samaria - all his preparations for war to defend the ecclesia were now negated by one act of compromise.

"Ahab killed sheep and oxen" - This display of honour and respect was part of Ahab's seduction of Jehoshaphat.

"persuaded" - CUWTH - to prick, to stimulate; by imp. to seduce. Same word is used of Ahab and Jezebel, 1 Kings 21:25. It is used again in 11 Chron. 18:31 where Yahweh reverses the situation. See also the Law concerning relatives - Deut. 13:6 ("entice").

"Ramoth-Gilead" - "Heights of Gilead", root word, Ramah means "high place" (sometimes a seat of idolatry). Gilead means "heap of testimony". A city of refuge in central Gilead, Deut. 4:43, Josh. 20:8.

V.3 - "Wilt thou go with me" - Invitation to join Ahab's forces - this was crucial for Ahab who saw the need to take Ramoth-Gilead by force as presumably Benhadad had not lived up to his promise, 1 Kings 20:34. Ahab was to pay for his mistake in allowing Benhadad to live. Cp. 1 Kings 20:34, 22:1-3

"I am as thou art" - In other words we are one, there is complete unity. A tragic contrast with his early years. In 1 Kings 22:4 he mentions horses as well - compare similarity with Solomon's downfall; riches, honour, marriage alliances, and horses (from Egypt).

### CRACKS APPEAR IN THE ALLIANCE 11 Chron. 18:4-11

V.4 - "Inquire....word of Yahweh" - DARASH - usually translated ("tread" or "frequent") walk; means to follow, to seek or ask; spec. to worship. This would highlight the enormous differences that existed - when ever had Ahab done this. Despite all declarations of unity they were really poles apart; the foundation of true unity did not exist. It was a facade, a sure recipe for disaster as it turned out. Amos 3:3.

V.5 - "prophets, four hundred men" - Out of Samaria; were these Jezebel's prophets? 1 Kings 18:19. Their answer betrayed their incompetence - they were manifestly false prophets.

V.6 - "Is there not here a prophet" - A diplomatic rebuff. Jehoshaphat was getting a little impatient of the pretentious crowd of fools before him masquerading as prophets but manifestly not. Imagine Ahab's consternation as these proceedings revealed how fragile the union really was.

V.7 - "There is yet one man" - Young Lit. "Still -one man".

"but I hate him" - SANE - to hate personally. Ahab's bitterness now manifests itself - being often reproved he had hardened his neck, Prov.29:1. This is revealing - obviously Micaiah was well known - why had Elijah fled to Horeb to declare that he was alone in Israel?

"always evil" - Roth. "but all his days - evil". Reveals Ahab's character - surely he should have woken up that he was doing something wrong. Doubtless he realised that, but had stubbornly fixed his course.

"the same is Micaiah the son of Imla" - There is contempt in Ahab's words, the smouldering hatred of a hard-hearted man.

"Micaiah" - "Who is like Yah", (not a question). The reason for Ahab's hatred was that he was too much like Yahweh.

"Imla" - "full". He was "full" of the things of God.

"Let not the king say so" - Jehoshaphat endeavours to diplomatically calm the disturbed atmosphere. His real sympathies were with Micaiah, so he calms Ahab's nerves as best he can, continuing to walk a shaky tightrope over spiritual quicksand.

V.8 "officers" - CARIC - to castrate, a eunuch; by implication a valet, (especially for female apartments). Note Potiphar Gen.37:36, Kings sons 11 Kings 20:18, Rabsaris (chief eunuch) 11 Kings 18:17. Used throughout Old Testament for officers of kings - dedicated, reliable, not distracted and undivided loyalties.

"Fetch quickly" - Roth. and Youngs Lit. - "Hasten". Ahab's impatience again revealed - the quicker this was over the better. He only endured it because he was politically dependant on an alliance with Jehoshaphat.

V.9 - "sat either of them" - Roth. "were sitting each upon his throne, clothed in robes". This was a full royal turn-out, regalia and all. The sad fact was that symbolically the throne of Judah was now in Samaria.



"void place" - GOREN - to smooth; a threshing floor; by anal. an open area. Roth.- "an open space." This was at the entrance of the gate of Samaria. Cp. context of 11 Kings 7.

"prophesied" - Roth.- "and all the prophets were prophesying before them." Jehoshaphat had already rejected the 400 but they continued to rant and rave before him.

V.10 - "Zedekiah" - "Yahweh is righteous".

"Chenaanah" - "Humiliated"; prim. root KANA (Canaan).

"horns of iron" - Symbol of power, Ps. 118:27, Hab. 3:4. May be an allusion to prophecy of Deut. 33:17.

V.11 - "prosper" - TSALEACH - to push forward. This was a concerted effort by Ahab's prophets to project themselves as prophets of Yahweh.

### THE PROPHECY OF MICAIAH 11 Chron. 18:12-27

V.12 - "with one assent" - Roth.- "with one mouth". An attempt to solicit Micaiah's cooperation to avoid disturbing the alliance with Jehoshaphat.

V.13 - "Yahweh liveth" - The real difference - Micaiah's words would be as Yahweh gave them. He was inflexible on this point. He was sensitive to the divine presence, therefore his actions were predicated upon that fact - not on human demands or for human convenience. There was a far greater power than Ahab.

V.14 - "Go ye up, and prosper" - Repeats the words of prophets in sarcasm. His cynicism was obvious and expected by Ahab.

V.15 - "How many times" - Micaiah's cynicism had occurred many times before. This is revealing as it shows that Ahab had been wrestling with Yahweh's prophet for some time - another proof of his steadfast obstinacy which had only ever been broken in Naboth's vineyard. 1 Kings 21:27-29. This verse shows that he knew that the correct prophecy was certainly not that of Zedekiah - that it was only wishful thinking, but he clung to it nevertheless.

"truth" - EMETH - A Divine characteristic, Exod.34:6. Ahab had come to a point when he expected as a matter of course that Yahweh's ideas would contradict his own.

V.16 - "all Israel" - Including Judah - with Ahab dead and Jehoshaphat weakened and compromised the situation was hopeless.

"no shepherd" - RA'AH - to tend a flock, ie. to pasture it, to rule. By extension to associate with (as a friend). Cp. Ezek.34 - Rev.2:27.

"master" - ADON - ruler, controller.

"in peace" - After defeat - a strange sequel to a lost war.

V.17 - "Did not I tell thee" - Ahab impatiently reminds Jehoshaphat that this was a repetition of former occasions.

V.18 - "Yahweh sitting upon his throne" - A picture of Yahweh enthroned gloriously in his habitation surrounded by his angels who do his bidding. He is presented as being in complete control of all things.

V.19 - "Who shall entice Ahab" - "entice" - PATHAH - to delude, seduce.

The result was inevitable - the method by 'natural' means only remained to be decided. Yahweh seeks suggestions from angels (he knew of course the surest method) and allows the angels to participate.

V.20 - "came out a spirit" - RUACH - Angels made spirits (Ruach). Psa.104:4; Heb.1:7,14. Synonymous with creative power.

"wherewith" - RSV. "by what means."

V.21 - "a lying spirit" - SHEQER - untruth. By implication, a sham; from the root, to cheat, be untrue. Roth. "a spirit of falsehood". Yahweh through the angel would influence Ahab's prophets to vehemently contend for him to go up to war.

"thou shalt also prevail" - Yahweh would be working in 2 ways - indirectly but surely, in Ahab's prophets and directly through Micaiah. He knew the result; Ahab would reject Micaiah's words as he always did, but what about Jehoshaphat. He had called for Micaiah, but he did not heed the warning.

V.22 - "Yahweh hath spoken evil against thee" - in two ways, through the 400 prophets and through Micaiah.

V.24 - "go into an inner chamber to hide thyself" - Roth. "a chamber within a chamber". He would seek refuge from one room to another. This would certainly impress him with the reality of things.

V.25 - "Amon the governor of the city" - Amon - "skilled builder" or "architect". Governor - SAR - head person.

"Joash the king's son" - "Yahweh-fired". Presumably another son of Ahab younger than his successor Ahaziah. Micaiah was counted worthy of "special" treatment in being committed into the hands of such influential men.

V.26 - "Put this fellow" - The word "fellow" can be deleted, and then Ahab's contempt and hatred of Micaiah becomes clear.

"bread....water of affliction" - "Affliction" is LACHATS - to press, ie. to distress. Roth. - "oppression." R.S.V. - "scant fare."

"I return in peace" - In typical defiance of verse 16.

V.27 - "Hearken, all ye people" - Reiterates verse 6 and calls upon all to take notice - became the basis of the prophet Micah's (same as Micaiah in Heb.) call to Israel later, Mic. 1:2. This is the only other place the phrase occurs. Youngs Lit. - "Hear ye, O peoples, all of them." Note that the theme of Micah's prophecy is the Shepherd of Israel and cp. 11 Chron. 18:16.

#### THE BATTLE AT RAMOTH-GILEAD 11 Chron. 18:28-34

V.28 - Jehoshaphat buries his obvious sympathies for the divine warnings. This illustrates the very real dangers of compromise.

V.29 - "disguise myself" - CHAPHAS - to conceal ones-self. Lxx - "Disguise me, and I will enter the battle and do thou put on my raiment." This was Ahab's method of escaping the consequences of Micaiah's prophecy - he was disguised as an ordinary soldier, but Jehoshaphat was substituting for him and became the "target". The amazing thing is that Jehoshaphat agreed

to become "The king of Israel". This illustrates the power of Ahab's seduction and the extent of Jehoshaphat's temporary blindness. It further underlines the dangers of compromise with error in any form.

V.30 - "only with the king of Israel" - Fittingly Syria were after the life of the king of Israel. This was most likely Benhadad whose life Ahab had spared - this was in fulfillment of the prophecy of 1 Kings 20:42. The flesh is relentless, it shows no mercy and should be given no quarter.

V.31 - "they compassed about him" - CABAB - to revolve, surround or border. Jehoshaphat was caught in the vortex of a whirlpool of hostile Syrians all anxiously seeking to be the one to kill 'Ahab'. "Jehoshaphat cried out" - ZA'AQ - to shriek, (from anguish or danger). This is a special cry for help from Yahweh made out of anguish and despair - used of Israel in Egypt, in Judges, David in Adullam. Used in Kings and Chronicles 5 times - 1 Chron.5:20, 1 Kings 22:32 (parallel), 11 Chron.18:31, 20:9, 32:20, (Hezekiah and Isaiah together). The usage in 20:9 reveals Jehoshaphat's deep sense of trust in Yahweh - the real Jehoshaphat is now revealed.

"God moved them from him" - CUWTH - to prick, to stimulate. An obvious connection with v2 where the same word is used. Ahab seduced Jehoshaphat into war disguised as the king of Israel (he virtually became Ahab) - in distress the real Jehoshaphat emerges. Yahweh reverses Ahab's work and recovered Jehoshaphat from the impending disaster.

V.33 - "drew a bow at a venture" - TOME - completeness, by extension, innocence. Translated "integrity" 10 times, "uprightness" 6 times, "simplicity" once, the plural "thummin" 5 times; (idea - Perfections). Yahweh's judgement of Ahab was now executed unbeknown to the instrument of its execution.

"between the joints of the harness" - joints - DEBEQ - a joint. Used only in Kings and Isa.41:7 "soldering" ie. solder - a metallic substance or mixture used in melted form to hold metals together. Thus RSV. "between the scale armour"; Roth. "shoulder joints"; Youngs Lit. "joinings - refers to weaker join around the shoulder and arm-pit area of the coat of mail. Harness - SHIR-YAHN - The breastplate of mail armour worn from a girdle around the waist and up to the neck - see only other use of the word, Isa. 59:17. RSV. "breastplate"; Youngs Lit. & Roth. "coat of mail". Ahab was smitten in the upper chest through the joint at the arm-pit. Connect Exod. 28:30; cp. "venture" (thummin) and "breastplate" - this is symbolic of Divine judgement meted out by Yahweh himself.

"Turn thine hand" - An order to take his chariot out of the front line but not out of the battle, 1 Kings 22:35 and v34. He remained in the battle to sustain the morale of the army.

"wounded" - CHALAH - weak, sick. In this form only found in the parallel record and 11 Chron.35:23, (a similar case - the death of Josiah by an arrow wound).

V.34 - "battle increased" - ALAH - to ascend, mount. RSV. "battle grew hot". There was no chance for Ahab to retire and dress the wound.

"stayed himself up in his chariot" - AMAD - to stand. RSV. "Propped himself up in the chariot facing the Syrians until evening, then at sunset he died". He died therefore through a loss of blood - slowly.

Ahab of IsraelTHE DEATH OF AHAB 1 Kings 22:35-40

V.35 - "blood ran out of the wound" - ran - YATSAQ - to pour out. RSV. "flowed".

"into the midst of the chariot" - RSV. "bottom"; Roth. "into the hollow of the chariot".

V.36 - "a proclamation.....going down of the sun" - ie. upon Ahab's death. Proclamation - RINNAH - creaking (a shrill sound), ie. "a shout - usually of joy but on this occasion of grief. Used of singing in 11 Chron. 20:22.

V.38 - "pool of Samaria" - BEREKAH - a reservoir. Perhaps it was outside of the walls of Samaria.

"dogs licked up his blood" - A partial fulfillment of Elijah's prophecy in 1 Kings 21:19.

"washed his armour" - ZONOWTH - harlots; confused by translators with ZUWN - equipment, but is in fact the plural of ZANAH - to commit adultery (highly fed and therefore wanton). Roth. "also the harlots bathed there"; RSV. "And the harlots washed themselves in it". A fitting end and repayment for his 'whoredoms' Rev.2:20. These harlots were most likely the ritual priestesses who presided over the worship in the temple of Baal.

"according unto the word of Yahweh" - 1 Kings 20:42, 21:19. The divine judgement was sure and certain - there had been a lapse of 3 years.

V.39 - "rest of the acts" - Record does not describe his architectural and structural achievements - it is concerned only with amplifying 1 Kings 21:25, "There was none like Ahab".

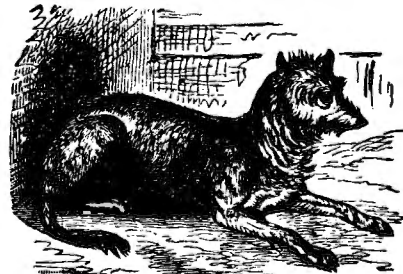
"the ivory house" - SHEN - tooth, tusk of elephants. His palace would have been of stone with ivory used abundantly throughout.

"cities that he built" - He was industrious in character. There is evidence that Ahab was both brave and determined to succeed - he was dedicated in whatever he pursued. Such a man could easily gain the 'distinction' of being Israel's worst king, particularly seeing he was encouraged and supported by an even more determined and strong willed Jezebel.

V.40 - "Ahaziah" - "Yah has seized".



"I have  
commanded  
the ravens  
to feed thee  
there."  
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SYRIAN DOG.

"Him that dieth of Ahab in the  
city the dogs shall eat."

# JEHOSHAPHAT - The Enigmatic Educator

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Yahweh is judge." From a root word meaning to judge (vindicate).  
By a paraphrase the name can mean "Yahweh is vindicated".

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 15:24

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 22:9

AGE AT ACCESSION - 35

LENGTH OF REIGN - 25 years from B.C. 871-847

MOTHER - Azubah - Heb. "Desertion". Daughter of Shilhi ("armed")  
1 Kings 22:42, 11 Chron. 20:31

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Ahab B.C. 874-853, Ahaziah B.C. 853-852, Jehoram  
B.C. 852-841.

NOTE - The only record of Jehoshaphat's history in Kings is in connection  
with Ahab, 1 Kings 22. A full history is supplied in Chronicles -  
11 Chron. 17-20.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

This king has gone down in the annals of Israel's history as one of its finest rulers. Few kings ever rose to the heights attained by Jehoshaphat and few experienced his success and national acclaim. He excelled in the leadership of men and was unsurpassed as an organiser and educator of the people in divine things, for which he was mightily blessed. Under his leadership and guidance Judah became a powerful and prosperous nation, greatly feared by their neighbours. And yet in spite of all this Jehoshaphat must be held responsible for making a marriage alliance with the house of Ahab that almost brought Judah to total disaster. The trouble into which his persistent attempts to confederate with Israel, brought Judah during his reign and following his death leave a dark shadow on an otherwise unblemished record.

Jehoshaphat is therefore something of an enigma. A great man with clear and positive objectives within Judah, who nevertheless ignored the dangers of compromise with the house of Ahab. A wise king who saw the need to educate all his people in the things of God so as to fortify them against the gentile evils introduced into Israel, but who strangely reversed his policy of separation from Israel and by a marriage alliance introduced into Judah the corrupt offspring of Ahab and Jezebel, apparently not realising that "a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump." He was a powerful military warrior who sought and received divine help, but was seemingly unaware that both his military power and divine help would leave him when he made an alliance with Yahweh's enemies. In short, Jehoshaphat was a man who fixed his heart to serve Yahweh, but who appears to have never fully appreciated the principles that govern true fellowship, as a result of which his own standing before God was constantly jeopardised.

There were two distinct phases in the life of Jehoshaphat as there was in the life of Asa his father. The record presents these in an interesting way in the early verses of 11 Chronicles 17 and 18. In the former, the language used is of a man ascending to great heights through a policy of separation from Israel and strong defence at home. In the latter the emphasis is upon descent - "Jehoshaphat went down" through a policy of compromise with Ahab and integration with Israel's military forces. The record of 11 Chronicles 17 is a moving account of a man who "soared" to great heights in the truth through complete trust in Yahweh, coupled with a sensitivity to the dangers of the world about him and the need to fortify the ecclesia against those dangers by the spiritual education of every member. The latter phase of his reign saw a complete change of policy and is marked by a gradual decline through the marriage alliance with the house of Ahab which eventually culminated in Athaliah the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel seizing complete control of the ecclesia.

On no less than three occasions did Jehoshaphat seek to confederate with Israel in military and trading ventures and each occasion was a disaster for Judah - only the intervention of Yahweh through Elisha prevented the third alliance from becoming a total disaster. The great lesson of Jehoshaphat's life is therefore, that compromise with error and idolatry inevitably leads to disaster, despite original strength. The key to success is to be found in the example of Jehoshaphat's early years.

In summary, Jehoshaphat was a righteous and dedicated servant of Yahweh who walked uprightly all his days and left a rare example for subsequent generations and kings of Judah. Note Elijah's estimation of Jehoshaphat - 11 Chron. 21:12. The most important feature of his reign was the diligent and thorough manner in which he sought to educate the ecclesia in spiritual things.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF JEHOSEPHATH'S REIGN

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession at age 35	22:41-42	17:1
Consolidates his kingdom - is blessed	22:46	17:1-6
Commences campaign of education		17:7-9
Given peace and is celebrated		17:10-11
Organises the defences of the nation		17:12-19
Makes a fatal alliance with Ahab	22:1-4	18:1-3
Rejects Ahab's prophets and embarrasses him	22:5-14	18:4-11
Seeks a prophet of Yahweh - Micaiah called	22:13-14	18:12-13
The prophecy of Micaiah	22:15-28	18:14-27
Goes into battle with Ahab	22:29-36	18:28-34
Returns to Jerusalem in peace		19:1
Jehu reproves him for his folly		19:2-3
He institutes a revival throughout Judah		19:4
Appoints judges in every city		19:5-7
Instructs the priests and Levites		19:8-11
A threat of war from Moab and Ammon		20:1-4
His prayer for help before the people		20:5-13
Yahweh's answer through Jahaziel		20:14-19
He leads Judah into battle		20:20-21
Victory from Yahweh - great spoil		20:22-25
He leads Judah in praise of their God		20:26-30
A foolish alliance with Ahaziah	22:48-49	20:35-37

Alliance with Jehoram and Edom

11 Kings      11 Chron.  
3:6-12

Dies aged 60

1 Kings  
22:50      21:1

Final summary and divine estimation

22:43-45      20:31-34

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### CONSOLIDATION OF THE KINGDOM 11 Chron. 17:1-6

V.1 - "strengthened himself against Israel" - "Strengthened" is CHAZAQ - to fasten upon, seize, to be strong. "Against" is AL - above, upon, over; from a root ALAH - to ascend (to be high), to mount. Jehoshaphat strengthened himself to rise above Israel and its ways. This was a positive approach which met with immediate and enormous success.

V.2 - "garrisons" - NETSIYB - something stationary, ie. a military post. Used of Lot's wife ("pillar"), Gen. 19:26. This word is used of David's garrisons only - no other king established them. Cities in Judah and the captured cities of Israel were fortified - a sound policy because Ahab was king in Israel at this time.

V.3 - "Yahweh was with Jehoshaphat" - Roth. - "And it came to pass that..." A fulfillment of 11 Chron. 15:2. The benefits are detailed in verse 15 - this is directly connected with the actions of verses 1 & 2.

"first ways" - Some read, "earlier ways of his father (Asa)." (R.S.V.) The margin of the A.V. is probably correct; "of his father and of David". The early days of Asa were exemplary and Jehoshaphat followed his example - 11 Chron. 14:2-8.

"sought not unto Baalim" - This does not suggest that Asa did, but that their predecessors and Ahab the king of Israel did. See verse 4.

V.4 - "sought" - DARASH - to tread, frequent (to follow). A strong contrast with Israel, emphasised deliberately. Yahweh is jealous over His truth and blessed Jehoshaphat because of his jealousy for divine things. James 4:5.

V.5 - "therefore" - As a consequence. It is significant that Jehoshaphat had set about establishing the kingdom but Yahweh in fact established it. The secret was his cooperation with divine providence - like his father he acted in accordance with the principles of truth and Yahweh helped him. "Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents" - MINCHAH - tribute. An unusual phenomena - subjects normally expect to be given something by their ruler. Here Judah out of appreciation and respect, and sympathy for his ways bring the king "tribute".

"riches and honour" - Asa had used his wealth to bribe Benhadad - Jehoshaphat now reached heights not attained by his father. The language is familiarly that of Solomon's days.

V.6 - "his heart was lifted up" - GABAH - to soar, to be lofty. Roth. - "his heart was encouraged." R.S.V. - "was courageous." His heart was not lifted up in pride but in strength and courage.

"took away the high places" - 11 Chron. 20:33, 1 Kings 22:43 indicate the opposite. Possibly like Asa he curtailed activity at them and probably destroyed some, but did not entirely remove the high places from Judah.

"groves" - ASHERIM. The abominable idolatry associated with Astarte and Aphrodite.



THE CAMPAIGN OF EDUCATION 11 Chron. 17:7-9

V.7 - "third year" - Ahab's 6th year.

"princes" - SAR - a head person. Roth. - "rulers."

"Benhail" - Heb. "son of might". "Obadiah" - Heb. "serving Yahweh".

"Zechariah" - Heb. "Yah has remembered". "Nethaneel" - Heb. "given of El".

"Michaiah" - Heb. "who is like Yahweh".

"to teach in the cities of Judah" - "Teach" is LAMAD - to goad, ie. to teach. Deut. 17:19, Ecc. 12:11.

TEACHING - ITS IMPORTANCE IN THE SCRIPTURES

- Deut. 4:10, 5:1, 31:9-13. Israel's continuance as a nation was dependent upon the education of its people in divine things.
- Isa. 1:16-17. Repression of evil is only successfully achieved by an education in divine principles. ie. Overcoming evil with good.
- Ezra 7:10. The true purpose of the priests and the Levites was to teach the Law and its principles to the nation.
- Ps. 25:4-10. Spiritual education - the pathway to salvation.

In the New Testament - Col. 1:9-10, Rom. 12:2, John 15:3, 17:17.

V.8 - "Levites" - Heb. attached; from primary root, to twine, ie. to unite, to remain. Their purpose was revealed in their name - John 15:3-7.

"Shemaiah" - "Yah has heard". "Nethaniah" - "Given of Yah".

"Zebadiah" - "Yah has given". "Asahel" - "El has made".

"Shemiramoth" - "Name of heights". "Jehonathan" - "Yahweh given".

"Adonijah" - "Yahweh is my Lord". "Tobijah" - "Goodness of Yahweh".

"Tob-Adonijah" - "Pleasing to Yahweh my ruler".

"Elishama" - "El of hearing". "Whom El hears" (Oxford).

"Jehoram" - "Yahweh raised". "Yahweh is high" (Oxford).

V.9 - "they taught in Judah" - LAMAD - goad. This was an organised campaign of education throughout all Judah. Jehoshaphat was intent on spiritually educating all his subjects.

A TIME OF PEACE 11 Chron. 17:10-11

V.10 - "they made no war" - A repetition of Asa's blessing - 11 Chron. 14:6 On the principle of Prov. 16:7.

JUDAH ORGANISED AND STRENGTHENED 11 Chron. 17:12-19

V.12 - "Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly" - "Waxed" - HALAK - to walk.

"Great" is GADEL - large. "Exceedingly" is MAAL - the upper part; upward, above, overhead, from the top. Note the continued use of words and phrases that speak of rising high and soaring aloft in the things of God.

"castles" - BIYRANIYTH - a fortress; from root meaning, a palace.

Jehoshaphat adopted the wise policy of building cities of defense with store-cities throughout Judah, even though it was a time of peace.

V.13 - "business" - MELAKAH - deputyship, ie. ministry. Refers to men employed by the king to promote his and the nation's economic interests.

V.14 - "Adna" - "Pleasure". (Primary root - to be soft or pleasant).

"chief" - SAR - a head person.

V.15 - "next to him" - Roth. "under his direction".

"Jehohanan" - "Yahweh - favoured".

"captain" - SAR - a head person. Same as "chief" v14.

V.16 - "Amasiah" - "Yah has loaded".

"Zichri" - "Memorable", see 11 Chron.23:1.

"who willingly offered himself unto Yahweh" - "willingly" - NADAB - to impel, hence to volunteer (as a soldier), to present spontaneously.

"offered" - ZABACH - to slaughter (sacrifice) - He was a living sacrifice. Rom.12:1.

V.17 - "Eliada" - "God is knowing".

"mighty man of valour" - Roth. "hero of valour".

V.18 - "Jehozabad" - "Yahweh - endowed".

"ready prepared" - CHALATS - to equip.

<u>JEHOSHAPHAT'S ARMY</u>		<u>COMPARE</u>
Adna -	300,000	Rehoboam - 180,000
Jehohanan -	280,000	Abijah - 400,000
Amasiah -	200,000	Asa - 580,000
Eliada -	200,000	
Jehozabad -	180,000	Ahab - "2 little flocks of Kids"
	<u>1,160,000</u>	1 Kings 20:27

V.19 - "beside those" - Many other soldiers were dispersed throughout the cities of Judah. Therefore the army was considerably larger than 1,160,000. The ecclesia was ready to fight the battles of the Truth - it was the great tragedy of Jehoshaphat's life that war never came. Instead, the ecclesia was to be torn apart by the results of Jehoshaphat's compromise with Ahab.

- Refer to the notes "Ahab and Jehoshaphat", which deal with 11 Chron.18.

#### JEHOSHAPHAT REPROVED - REFORMS 11 Chron. 19:1-11

V.1 - "returned to his house in peace" - Exactly the words used in Micaiah's prophecy 11 Chron.18:16. He had made the mistake of considering Ahab a "shepherd".

"to Jerusalem" - This is where he belonged - not in the gate of Samaria.

V.2 - "Jehu the son of Hanani" - Jehu - "Yah is he". Hanani - "gracious". Appeared in the record approximately 40 years earlier where he condemned Baasha, 1 Kings 16:1. Referred to again as having recorded Jehoshaphat's history, 11 Chron.20:34. Hanani his father rebuked Asa for putting his trust in Benhadad, 11 Chron.16:7. Reason for sending a prophet named Jehu could be that Yahweh would deal with Ahab's house by a 'Jehu' to their destruction and with Jehoshaphat by a Jehu unto reformation.

"went out to meet him" - Yahweh "went out" to confront him immediately, with a view to recovering Jehoshaphat from the effects of compromise with

Ahab.

"shouldest thou help the ungodly" - RASHA - morally wrong, actively bad - clearly a rebuke for the change of policy from 11 Chron.17:1-3. He may have desired to help Israel return to Yahweh but instead he and his family were entangled in their evil ways.

"love them that hate Yahweh" - love - AHAB - A primary root, to have affection for. It is an interesting coincidence that the Heb. word "love" is Ahab.

"hate" - SANE - to hate personally, the same word as in 11 Chron.18:7.

"therefore is wrath upon thee" - The principle of James 4:4, to love Yahweh's enemies or to help them is to become like them in his eyes.

V.3 - "found" - MATSA - to come forth, ie. appear or exist.

"groves" - refers to the purge of 11 Chron.17:6.

"prepared thine heart" - KUWN - to be erect, (ie. stand perpendicular), to set up, fix, establish.

"to seek God" - DARASH - to follow, tread or frequent; reference to 11 Chron. 17:4,6.

V.4 - "dwelt at Jerusalem" - For emphasis - as opposed to Samaria. Connect v1.

"he went out again" - Roth. "and he again went forth".

"Beersheba to Mt. Ephraim" - "Well of an oath", to "double - fruit" - this covers the entire area of his kingdom and is a reinstitution of the campaign of 11Chron.17:7-9. True repentance, as Jehoshaphat reverses his policy of 11 Chron.18:1-3.

"brought them back" - Reformation is a long process and he now continues his work of education. Asa had succeeded after 15 years. Needful in view of 11 Chron.20:33 - Jehoshaphat's response to the prophecy of Jehu can be compared to Asa's response to Azariah's 11 Chron.15:1-15.

V.5 - "set judges in the land" - "Judge" is SHAPHAT - to judge, to pronounce sentence, vindicate. (A play on his name). He firmly established the principles of the Law of Moses. A dissemination of justice, Deut. 16:18.

"city by city" - A thorough campaign involving all the inhabitants of Judah in a step by step process.

V.6 - "Take heed what you do" - "Take heed" is RA'AH - to watch, to see.

Roth. - "See what ye are doing". R.S.V. - "consider".

"not for man but for Yahweh" - They were to become "Jehoshaphats" (Yahweh's judges) - He reminded them of the principles of the Law - Deut. 1:16-17.

"who is with you in the judgement" - R.S.V. - "he is with you in giving judgement." Imposes a great responsibility upon Judges - cp. 11 Sam. 16:23 1 Peter 4:11. This was a further development in his campaign of education - Isa. 1:17. "Judgement" is DABAR - word; matter.

V.7 - "let the fear of Yahweh be upon you" - "Fear" is PACHAD - a sudden alarm; root, to be startled. Same word as found in 11 Chron. 17:10. Always used in sense of dread and terror, not normally of reverence.

"take heed and do it" - SHAMAR - to hedge about, ie. guard, to protect. The word is used extensively throughout the Law translated "keep" and "observe". Cp. Deut. 17:19 - This is obviously a reference to the ideas contained in "The Law of the King" - ("keep and do it").

"no iniquity with Yahweh" - AVLAH - evil; to distort. This is well attested Deut. 32:4, Ps. 92:15.

"nor respect of persons" - "Respect" is MASSO - partiality (as a lifting up); the only use of this word. "Persons" is PANEH - the face (as the part that turns). Youngs Lit. - "an acceptance of faces."  
 "nor taking of gifts" - "Taking" is MIQQACH - reception. "Gifts" is SHACHAD - a donation; root, to bribe. Ex. 23:8, Deut. 16:19, Prov. 17:23, 18:16, 21:14, Ecc. 7:7.

V.8 - "set of the Levites" - AMAD - to stand. A renewal of the work of 11 Chron. 17:8. The proper status given to the Levites rejected by Jeroboam.

"chief of the fathers of Israel" - R.S.V. - "heads of the families of Israel." ie. chief of each tribe.

"controversies" - RIYB - a contest; root, to toss, wrangle, grapple. Roth. - "to settle disputes".

"when they returned to Jerusalem" - ie. when they had completed their task in the country and returned he did not cease work but continued in Jerusalem. *Deut 17:8-10*

V.9 - "charged" - TSAVAH - to constitute, enjoin.

"in the fear of Yahweh" - YIRAH - fear, reverence.

"faithfully" - EMUNAH - firmness; fig. security, trustworthy.

"perfect" - SHALEM - complete; to be safe. See note 11 Chron. 15:17.

V.10 - "warn" - ZAHAR - prim. root, to gleam, hence to enlighten. Used in future tense Dan. 12:3 - note context and margin (teachers). The word is used 22 times in the O.T. - occurs 12 times in Ezek. 3 & 33 where the context is "watchmen" and their responsibilities.

"wrath come upon you" - Connect verse 2. Jehoshaphat's previous course had landed him in this situation. This underlines the lesson that heavy responsibility rests on teachers and leaders - connect 11 Chron. 18:16. This was now rectified. See also - Heb. 13:17, James 2:1.

"this do and ye shall not trespass" - Roth. - "Thus shall ye act and not incur guilt."

V.11 - "Amariah the chief priest" - "Amariah" means "Yah has said", ie. promised. Roth. - "Is over you as to all matters of Yahweh."

"Zebadiah" - "Yah has given".

"son of Ishmael" - "God will hear".

"ruler of the house of Judah" - NAGID - a commander.

"kings matters" - There was complete organisation both in religious and civil matters.

"officers" - SHOTER - to write, a scribe; by imp. a superintendent.

"deal courageously" - "Deal" is ASAH - to do, act. "Courageously" is the word CHAZAQ - be strong, courageous. Roth. - "be strong and act, and Yahweh be with the good." - reversion to 11 Chron. 17:1-3.

### THE THREAT OF MOAB AND AMMON 11 Chron. 20:1-4

V.1 - "the children of Moab....Ammon" - A confederacy of nations related to Israel through Abraham, whom Israel were commanded to leave alone when they drew near to the land of Canaan under Moses, verse 10. They were Moab, Ammon and Seir, verse 10 & 22.

V.2 - "Hazazon-Tamar" - "Division of the palm tree."

"Engedi" - "Fountain of a kid."

V.3 - "feared" - YARE - to fear, revere; can mean to be frightened.  
"set himself" - NATHAN - to give. Roth.-"set his face."  
"seek Yahweh" - DARASH - to follow, tread, seek. 11 Chron.19:3.  
"proclaimed a fast" - QARA - to call out. A fast was proclaimed at a time of national crisis or to call the nation to reflect upon their ways. Ezra 8:21, Joel 1:14, Jonah 3:5.

V.4 - "Judah gathered themselves together" - A testimony to the success of Jehoshaphat's work. He had instilled into the people a dependence upon Yahweh.

"seek" - BAQASH - to search out; to strive after.

### JEHOSHAPHAT'S PRAYER FOR HELP 11 Chron. 20:5-13

V.5 - "congregation" - QAHAL - assemblage (equivalent to "ecclesia").  
"new court" - Evidently one of his own projects.

V.6 - A classic opening to a prayer - a declaration of the power and sovereignty of Yahweh. Cp. the Lord's prayer, Matt. 6:9-13.

V.7 - Recalls divine covenants - Israel's guarantee of survival.  
"Abraham thy friend" - The word "friend" is AHAB - to have affection for. Same word trans. "love", 11 Chron. 19:2. (normal word for "love" in O.T.)

V.8-9 - A recourse to Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple. 11 Chron.6:28-31 and Yahweh's assurance 7:12-16.  
"affliction" - TSARAH - tightness, figuratively, trouble.

V.10 - "whom thou wouldst not let Israel invade" - Refer to Deut.2:4-5, 9,19 - a divine decree.

V.11 - "thy possession" - A proper view of things; this argument was what Yahweh desired, he could and would not ignore it. Psalms 83:12.

V.12 - "might" - KOWACH - to be firm, vigour, literally force. Judah's mighty army was in disarray due to the defeat at Ramoth Gilead - doubtless Ammon, Moab and Seir, saw an opportunity to defeat Judah while they were weakened.

V.13 - "all Judah stood before Yahweh" - A complete response from all Judah. Families gathered to Jerusalem to seek Yahweh's help in a time of crisis. This is another testimony to the effects of Jehoshaphat's national campaign of education.

### YAHWEH'S ANSWER TO JEHOSHAPHAT 11 Chron. 20:14-19

V.14 - "Jahaziel" - "Beheld of God".

Zechariah - "Yah hath remembered".

"Benaiah" - "Yah has built".

"Jeiel" - "carried away of God".

"Mattaniah" - "gift of Yah".

The notable thing about the sons of Asaph is the way names are carried on

through successive generations. Note 1 Chron.9:15, 11 Chron.29:13, 1 Chron. 16:4-6. The significant thing is that the sons of Asaph were leaders of song and praise which was to play a big part in the following events. "Asaph" - "collector" (family of Gershon, 1 Chron.6:39,15:17).

V.15 - "dismayed" - CHATHATH - to prostrate, hence to breakdown. "for the battle is not yours" - This is what Jehoshaphat had sought - faith is answered. 1 Sam.17:47.

V.16 - Divine help is given but on the basis of our preparedness to act in cooperation with God.

"cliff of Ziz" - cliff - MA'ALAH - an elevation or platform.

Ziz - "bloom" (glistening, ie. burnished plate). Unger - a flower, bright shining thing. An ascent or cleft leading up from the Dead Sea to the region of Tekoa, v20 - about 10 to 12 miles south of Jerusalem.

"end of the brook" - NACHAL - a stream (by implication a valley).

"wilderness of Jeruel" - wilderness - MIDBAR - pasture, by implication a desert. Jeruel - "founded of God".

V.17 - "set yourselves" - YATSAB - to place, to station. Note no need to fight but a need to be stationed ready.

"stand ye still .....go out against them" - Seeming paradox - the secret of Divine help and providence. Cp. the only other occurrence of the phrase "stand still", Exod.14:13-15.

V.18 - "worshipping" - SHACHAH - to depress, ie. prostrate. A spontaneous recognition of Yahweh's greatness and his mercy - they were overwhelmed. 11 Chron.7:3.

V.19 - "Korhites" - "ice", sons of Korah, cp. Psalms 44-49. These were of the family of Korah the Kohathite.

"loud voice on high" - RSV. "a very loud voice": Roth. "an exceeding loud voice".

### JUDAH GOES TO BATTLE 11 Chron. 20:20-21

V.20 - "Tekoa" - "a trumpet". Hometown of Amos. Amos 1:1.

"believe in Yahweh" - AMAN - primary root, to build or support; in a figure, to render firm, to trust or believe.

"so shall ye be established" - AMAN - same as above. Youngs Lit. "remain steadfast in Yahweh ..... and be steadfast".

"believe his prophets" - Connect 18:16, 27-28.

"prosper" - TSALEACH - to push forward; same word used in 11 Chron.18:11,14.

V.21 - "consulted" - YA'ATS - to advise. Roth. "given counsel".

"that should praise" - HALAL - to be clear, ie. sing.

"the beauty of holiness" - HADARAH - decoration. Always used of worshippers in appropriate attire or disposition. 1 Chron.16:29; Job 40:10; Psalm 29:2; 96:9. Roth. "and offer praise with holy adornment".

"Praise Yahweh; for his mercy endureth forever" - taken up and used perhaps in remembrance of Psalm 136 (occurs 26 times).

"Praise" - YADAH - to use the hand; ie. worship with extended hands.

THE BATTLE - VICTORY FROM YAHWEH 11 Chron. 20:22-30

V.22 - "And when they began" - Youngs Lit. "And at the time"; ie. as they marched out of Jerusalem the battle began - it would take them half a day to reach Tekoa but Yahweh had gone before them.

"to sing and praise" - sing - RINNAH - a creaking (or shrill sound). ie. shout - used 1 Kings 22:36. Praise - TEHILLAH - laudation, a hymn. (The Hebrew word for Psalms is tehillim).

"set ambushments" - ARAB - to lurk. Who these were is not revealed but the result was that Moab and Ammon joined battle with Mt. Seir hence Yahweh in some way sowed the seed of disunity and suspicion which exploded into war.

"they were smitten" - RSV. "and they were routed".

V.23 - "utterly to slay and destroy" - Youngs Lit., Roth. "to devote and to destroy".

V.24 - "came toward the watch tower" - MITSEPH - an observatory. Judah arrived when it was all over - all they could do was "watch", cp. Exod.14:30.

"they looked" - PANAH - to turn, by implication, to face.

"and behold" - Roth. "and lo, there they were".

V.26 - "Berachah" - "Benediction", by implication, prosperity.

"blessed" - BARAK - to kneel, to bless God.

V.27 - "Jehoshaphat in the forefront" - ROSH - at the head.

"joy" - SIMCHAH - blithesomeness or glee.

"rejoice" - SAMACH - to brighten up, be gleesome.

V.28 - "psalteries" - NEBEL - a skin bag; thought to be a form of harp like a guitar which looked like the shape of a filled water skin.

V.29 - "fear" - PACHAD - sudden alarm.

V.30 - "realm" - MALKUYAH - a rule, a dominion.

"quiet" - SHAQAT - to repose.

"rest" - NUWACH - to rest, ie. settle down. This is clearly reminiscent of 11 Chron.17:10, 15:15, 14:6.

DIVINE SUMMARY AND ESTIMATION 11 Chron. 20:31-34

V.31 - "Azubah" - "desertion".

"Shilhi" - "armed (with a missile)".

V.33 - "prepared their hearts" - KUWN - to be erect, hence to set up, establish or fix; see note on 11 Chron.19:3.

V.34 - "Jehu the son of Hanani" - see 11 Chron.19:2.

"who is mentioned" - ALAH - to ascend, to mount. Roth. "which hath been added to the book".

A FOOLISH VENTURE WITH AHAZIAH 11 Chron. 20:35-37

V.35 - "after this" - ie. after a period of peace. This had brought about



his downfall before, as well as that of Asa - unmixed peace and prosperity is dangerous if not approached with vigilance.

"join himself" - CHABAR - to join; specially (by means of spells) to fascinate. This was a family problem - blood was thicker than water.

"very wickedly" - Roth. "he was lawless in his doings".

V.36 - "joined himself" - CHABAR - as in v35.

"Ezion-geber" - "Backbone like of a man". The modern port of Elat; hence the Tarshish is probably India - a revival of Solomon's navy, 11 Chron. 8:17-18.

V.37 - "Eliezer" - "God of help".

"Dodavah" - "Love of Yah".

"Mareshah" - "summit". The place of Asa's defeat of the Ethiopians - 11 Chron.14:9-10, Micah 1:15.

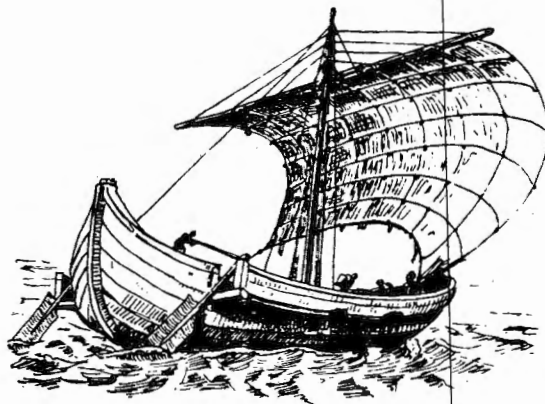
"broken thy works" - PARATS - to break.

"ships were broken" - SHABAR - to burst, 11 Chron.14:13. Connect these events with this context.

See the parallel record in 1 Kings 22:48-49. Ahaziah renewed attempts to join with Jehoshaphat in a fresh venture but wisely Jehoshaphat declined, having learnt the lesson for the time being, that compromise with Israel spelled disaster - it seems incredible that he was to fall into this same trap again 2 years later.

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Additional notes on Jehoshaphat are to be found on page 71 under the sub-heading "Ahab and Jehoshaphat" and on page 92 under the sub-heading "Jehoram and Jehoshaphat".



"The ships were broken."

# AHAZIAH -

## The Clumsy Pagan

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Yah has seized".FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 22:40LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 22:11LENGTH OF REIGN - 2 years

From B.C. 853-852

FATHER - Ahab ("The brother of his father")MOTHER - Jezebel ("chaste")SISTER - Athaliah ("Yah has constrained"). Wife of Jehoram the crown prince of Judah.CONTEMPORARY KING - Jehoshaphat B.C. 871-847.Note - No history is supplied in Chronicles but he is mentioned 3 times.SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The brief reign of the eldest son of Ahab was characterised by continual misfortune. External peace was shattered with the revolt of the vassal kingdom of Moab, and disaster struck at home when Ahaziah fell from a balcony of his palace and was fatally injured. On his death-bed Ahaziah reveals himself to be a genuine product of Ahab and Jezebel by sending to the centre of the pagan god Baal-zebub for information regarding his future. Such demonstrations of infidelity and idolatry were to be expected from the children of Jezebel, but it was nevertheless an appalling state of affairs that such a man should sit on the throne of Israel once occupied by David, the beloved. How low Israel had fallen through the apostasy of Ahab and his unholy alliance with Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians.

So infuriated was Yahweh with the infidelity of Ahaziah that he intervened through Elijah and passed the death sentence upon him. So he died of the injuries sustained in the fall from the balcony of his palace - a fitting end for a man who ignored the law of Deut. 22:8 which provided for a safe place upon the housetop where prayer to Yahweh could be offered; but instead sent to offer his prayers before the pagan god of the dung-heap.

HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF AHAZIAH

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession and divine estimation	22:51-53	
Makes an alliance with Jehoshaphat	22:49	20:35-37
	<u>11 Kings</u>	
Moab rebels against him	1:1	
Falls from the balcony - fatally injured	1:2	

Messengers to Baal-zebub meet Elijah	<u>11 Kings</u>
The messengers return to Ahaziah	1:3-4
He sends troops to apprehend Elijah	1:5-8
Elijah calls down fire twice from heaven	1:9
Third captain is humble - receives mercy	1:10-12
Elijah declares Ahaziah's doom	1:13-15
The death of Ahaziah	1:15-16
	1:17-18

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 1 Kings 22:51-53

V.52 - "way of his mother" - A phrase that only ever occurs in relation to Jezebel and Athaliah. Jezebel was to feature as the force behind both Ahaziah and his brother, but less in the latter than the former, 11 Kings 3:2.

V.53 - "That his father had done" - The result of sound training in idolatry; he was Ahab all over again.

THE DEATH OF AHAZIAH 11 Kings 1:1-17

V.1 - "Moab rebelled" - As it was Jehoram his brother who went to war with Moab, 11 Kings 3:5-6, Ahaziah's reign was probably only a little over a year - see 1 Kings 22:51, 11 Kings 3:1.

V.2 - "a lattice" - SEBAKAH - a net-work (in an arch); a ballustrade - used to keep out light and give privacy on the roof of the palace but not in accordance with the law of Deut. 22:8.

"upper chamber" - ALIYAH - lofty, ie. a stairway; also a second story room. He had an area on the roof of his palace for recreation - the balconies were bordered by the lattice and due to an accident of some sort he fell through it. The law of Deut. 22:8 had been ignored and Ahaziah paid the ultimate penalty.

"Go, inquire" - DARASH - to tread or frequent. Lit. to seek. Contrast Jehoshaphat his contemporary in Judah, 11 Chron. 19:3.

"Baal-zebub" - "Lord of the flies". (ie. the god of the dung-heap). Only mentioned in this chapter of the O.T. - so called because he was deemed to have power over disease (carried by flies). Reveals result of Jezebel's work in conditioning the minds of her children - they had a god for every purpose; the all-seeing, all powerful Creator and Sustainer did not enter their considerations.

"Ekron" - Heb. "Eradication", from the root - , to pluck up, to hamstring, figuratively, to exterminate. A city 11 miles from Gath in Philistine territory.

"recover" - CHAYAH - to live.

"disease" - CHOLIV - malady, anxiety, calamity.

V.3 - "Is it not because there is not a God" - Roth. "Is it because there is no God in Israel". Surely Ahaziah could not believe that - the evidence is however, that he had been wholly paganised by his mother.

V.7 - "What manner of man" - MISHPAT - verdict, a sentence, (the word has a wide application and can mean "style").

V.8 - "hairy" - SA'AR - dishevelled hair (as if tossed or bristling) - different word to that used of Esau (SA'IR - shaggy, he goat; translated devil).

"girt" - AZAR - to belt.

"leather" - OWR - skin (as naked) by implication, hide, leather; from the primary root UWR - to be bare.

"loins" - MOTHEH - to be slender, the waist.

"It is Elijah" - Roth. "Elijah the Tishbite it was". Some commentators suggest Elijah wore a hairy camel skin tied on with a leather belt. Whatever it was he was instantly recognised - like John the Baptist who came in "the Spirit and power of Elijah" his unique manner and dress characterised his position as a reforming prophet in Israel.

V.9 - "fifty" - connect and compare 11 Kings 2:16.

V.10 - "let fire" - LXX. "fire shall come down". Connect context of Luke 9:51-56 and note the frequent occurrence of Elijah's name in this chapter.

V.13 - "fell on his knees" - Heb. "bowed on his knees". (Roth.)

"besought" - CHANAN - to bend or stoop to implore.

"I pray thee" - A change in attitude from the captains of v9 and v11.

"precious" - YAQAR - to be heavy, ie. valuable (to make rare).

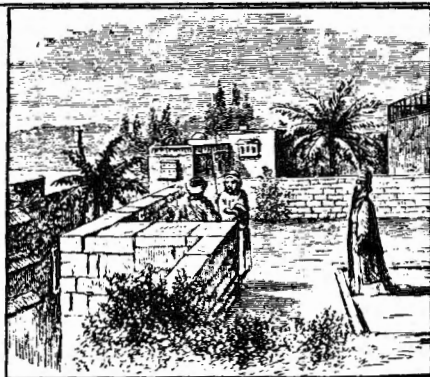
V.15 - "be not afraid of him" - There was a measure of reverence and fear in this captain for Elijah's God. A significant reference to Elijah's fear which seems to have been something of a problem to him all his days. Though a man of great strength and boldness he nevertheless at times acts out of an unnecessary fear for his personal safety. Doubtless this can be traced to his feeling of total isolation from the rest of the nation expressed on Horeb.

V.17 - "Jehoram" - Ahaziah's brother - Ahab's son.

"second year of Jehoram" - Jehoshaphat still had 7 years to reign in Judah but Jehoram his son was co-regent. This reveals the influence of Athaliah and Jezebel (there was no reason for a co-regency except Jehoshaphat's absence in Samaria and Ramoth-gilead). These two evil women had contrived to seize power in Judah and effectively neutralise Jehoshaphat.

"And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber."

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EASTERN PALACED HOUSE.

# JEHORAM -

## The Moderate

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Yahweh raised".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 1:17

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 22:7

LENGTH OF REIGN - 12 years

From B.C. 852-841

FATHER - Ahab

MOTHER - Jezebel

SISTER - Athaliah

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Jehoshaphat B.C. 871-847, Jehoram B.C. 848-841, Ahaziah B.C. 841.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Whereas Ahab's eldest son Ahaziah had vigorously pursued his father's Baal worship, Jehoram the younger son who acceded upon the accidental death of his brother, was a "moderate" in idolatry, by comparison. He removed the idol to Baal from Samaria and reinstituted the more innocuous but no less evil idolatry of Jeroboam. Although both were abhorrent to Yahweh Jehoram probably considered his action to be a grand gesture of conciliation to Judah and to Yahweh the God of Jehoshaphat.

His approach to Jehoshaphat for military assistance after the revolt of the king of Moab, reveals him as a diplomat of some skill and confirms the view that he considered his rejection of Baal as a concession to Judah which would permit a military alliance to be established with Jehoshaphat. The message sent to Jehoshaphat seeking his help is couched in diplomatic terms and casually assumes that no impediment to an alliance existed. Following the debacle of Ramoth-Gilead and the stern rebuke of Jehoshaphat for his alliance with Ahab it might have been expected that never again would Jehoshaphat need to be admonished with the words; "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate Yahweh". (11 Chron.19:2). However, now that Baal worship had been officially rejected in Israel by Jehoram, perhaps Jehoshaphat considered that the situation was different. Whatever may have been Jehoshaphat's feelings, he foolishly entered into a military alliance with Israel that almost ended in disaster.

The campaign against Moab is the only event in which an insight into Jehoram's character is offered. He is revealed as a man who recognised Yahweh but placed no faith in him. As soon as adversity threatened the welfare of the confederate armies he ascribed the misfortune to Yahweh. Not for one moment did he entertain the obvious fact that the troubles experienced were directly attributable to his evils and that of his father's house.

Yahweh revealed what he thought of Jehoram in the encounter that king had with Elisha at the height of the crisis in the wilderness of Edom, saying through the prophet; "What have I to do with thee? Get to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother..... surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah,

I would not look toward thee, nor see thee".

## HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF JEHORAM'S REIGN

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Succeeds his brother to throne	1:17	
Reverts to Jeroboam's idolatry	3:1-3	
Moab revolts against him	3:4-5	
Makes alliance with Jehoshaphat and king of Edom	3:6-8	
Lack of water - Elisha called	3:9-12	
Elisha prophesies victory over Moab	3:13-20	
Moab's forces defeated	3:21-25	
Withdraws as tripartite crumbles	3:26-27	
War with Hazael of Syria	8:28-29	
Elisha anoints Jehu to destroy Ahab's house	9:1-10	22:7
Jehu proclaimed king	9:11-13	
At Jezreel recovering from wounds	9:14-15	22:5-6
Jehu conspires against him	9:14-16	
Jehu comes to Jezreel	9:16-20	
Jehoram rides out to meet Jehu	9:21-22	
Is slain by an arrow from Jehu	9:23-24	
Is dumped in the field of Naboth	9:25-26	

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

### ACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Kings 3:1-3

V.1 - "eighteenth year....of Jehoshaphat" - Actually 2nd of Jehoram's co-regency with Jehoshaphat, 11 Kings 1:17 - two Jehorams reigned; one in Judah the other in Israel. In fact Ahab's house was in control in both kingdoms.

V.2 - "not like his father" - Jehoram reverted to Jeroboam's "religion" and rejected Baal as his god. That is, he gave some acknowledgement to Yahweh's claims but in a perverted and corrupt form. This of course was quite unacceptable but better than either Ahab or Ahaziah and their pagan idolatry. "image of Baal" - MATSTSEBAH - a column idol. This was erected again later - 11 Kings 10:27.

V.3 - "cleaved" - DABAQ - to impinge, ie. cling, adhere.

### THE REVOLT OF MOAB 11 Kings 3:4-5

V.4 - "Mesha king of Moab" - Name means "safety". "sheepmaster" - NOQED - a spotter, ie. owner or tender of sheep.

V.5 - "the king of Moab rebelled" - Repeats 11 Kings 1:1 which is thus placed to indicate the rapid turn of events after the death of Ahab - Moab's burden as a vassal had become intolerable and Ahab's defeat and death, provided the opportunity and incentive for rebellion. This revolt is placed in the history before the war described in 11 Chron.20.

## • JEHORAM and JEHOSHAPHAT •

### THE TRIPARTITE ALLIANCE - WAR WITH MOAB 11 Kings 3:6-27

V.7 - "he went and sent to Jehoshaphat" - Roth. "so he departed and sent unto Jehoshaphat".

"I will go up" - Less than 2 years had passed since the fatal alliance of 1 Kings 22:4. Jehoshaphat had not learned the lesson of the dangers of compromise with Israel - he was the victim of family ties.

V.8 - "And he said" - The record does not state it, but it is Jehoram who asks Jehoshaphat which way to advance.

V.9 - "king of Edom" - 1 Kings 22:47 says there was none, but also states that the deputy acted as king.

"fetched a compass" - Roth. "went round".

V.10 - "Yahweh hath called" - Jehoram did at least accept that Yahweh existed, but predictably he manifested no faith in him and accused him of deliberately seeking to destroy the confederate kings. Obviously Jehoram realised his alienation from Yahweh through sin.

V.11 - "Is there not here a prophet" - Almost exactly the same words as 1 Kings 22:7. This was to be a repetition of that bitter experience.

"Elisha" - "To whom El is salvation.

"Shaphat" - "Judgement".

"poured water" - A Middle East custom at meal times - water is symbolic of the Word. This was what was lacking through Jehoshaphat's compromise with Ahab's house.

V.12 - "The word of Yahweh is with him" - Jehoshaphat knew of Elisha and quickly recognised him as a prophet of Yahweh who could help - he could provide the "Word" to break the drought.

V.13 - "What have I to do with thee" - Roth. "What have I and thee in common". Jehoram's response at least acknowledges Yahweh's sovereignty in the matter, but he again seeks to blame Yahweh for their troubles, not his own evils and idolatry.

V.14 - "As Yahweh of hosts liveth" - Elisha takes up Elijah's normal introductory words, 1 Kings 17:1.

"regards" - NACAH - to lift (great variety of application).

"presence" - PANEH - the face.

"not look toward thee" - Reveals divine attitude to Jehoram through Elisha. A modified form of "Ahabism" was not acceptable and Yahweh would not countenance it.

V.15 "bring me a minstrel" - NAGAN - to thrum, ie. beat a tune with the fingers, to play a stringed instrument. For the place of music in prophesy-  
ing see 1 Sam.10:5-6, 1 Chron.25:1-3.

"hand of Yahweh" - Reminiscent of Elijah 1 Kings 18:46 - see Ezekiel's experience, Ezek.1:3, 3:14,22.

V.16 - "ditches" - GEB - well or cistern (as dug).

V.17 - "wind, neither shall ye see rain" - The mountains of Edom rising to 5,000 feet receive heavy rains from westerly winds but this was to be a miracle, with no apparent signs of rain.

V.18 - "a light thing" - QALAL - to be light, figuratively easy.



V.19 - "choice city" - MIBCHAR - select, ie. the best.

"fell every good tree" - forbidden under the Law but not observed in this war, Deut.20:19-20.

"stop all wells" - Connect v16-17.

"mar" - KA'AB - to spoil (grieve). v25.

V.20 - "meat offering" - Roth. "when the offering ascended". RSV. "offering of the sacrifice". The word is not MINCHAH - this appears to be the morning burnt offering.

"water by the way of Edom" - DEREK - A road (as trodden). Perhaps the water also ran up hill. Isa.35:6-7.

V.22 - "rose up early in the morning" - Same morning as v20, hence the feverish activity of the allied armies seeking water for men and animals would appear like confusion in the camp. Add to this the sight of what seemed like blood and v23 is explained.

V.23 - "slain" - CHAREB - to parch (through drought) ie. by analogy, to desolate, destroy, kill....the opposite was the case. The Moabites left their fortifications prepared only to pick up the spoils - they were in for a surprise.

V.24 - "camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up" - Note this description - another loss of identity for Judah - only Israel is mentioned. The Moabites running headlong towards the camp in pursuit of easy spoils were completely disorganised. RSV. "They went forward slaughtering the Moabites as they went".

V.25 - The fulfillment of v19. Destruction of the cities and land would impede Moab's recovery.

"only in Kir-Haraseh" - "Fortress of earthenware". Some uncertainty exists as to translation of the text - the general sense is that this city was the last stronghold of Moab to overcome, a task accomplished by slingers.

V.26 - "too sore for him" - Roth. "prevailed against him".

"to break through" - BAQA - to cleave, to rend, break.

"unto the king of Edom" - For what purpose is not known. It could have been to defeat his forces, he being the weakest point in the encircling armies and hence gain tactical advantage or he may have thought it possible to arrange 'peace' terms with the king of Edom, thus destroying the confederacy.

V.27 - "offered him for a burnt offering" - To Chemosh who was worshipped with human sacrifice. The Mesha Inscription attributed Moab's subjugation to the anger of Chemosh - in his extremity the king of Moab makes the supreme sacrifice of the crown prince to appease his deities anger.

"great indignation against Israel" - QETSEPH - a splinter (as chipped off). figuratively, rage, strife. A split emerged in the alliance - perhaps the king of Edom was frightened of some reaction from Chemosh and withdrew. It is probable that Israel and Judah were outraged by the actions of the king of Moab - it became apparent that withdrawal was the soundest policy - another demonstration of the weakness of an alliance based on compromise.

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# JEHORAM -

## The Ill-fated Murderer

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Yahweh raised".

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 22:50

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 22:11

LENGTH OF REIGN - 8 years

From B.C. 848-841.

FATHER - Jehoshaphat ("Yahweh is judge")

WIFE - Athaliah (of Israel)

CONTEMPORARY KING - Jehoram B.C. 852-841.

AGE AT ACCESSION - 32

AT DEATH - 40

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The righteousness of Jehoshaphat was sharply contrasted with the wickedness of Jehoram, his son, in the circumstances surrounding the accession of the latter to the throne. True to his character, Jehoshaphat bestowed the crown upon his eldest son according to the law of the firstborn, but not satisfied with this Jehoram brutally murdered his younger brethren in order to remove all rivals to the throne. That he was moved to commit this vile crime by his wife Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, is beyond dispute. Murder was always considered as a justifiable political expedient by Jezebel and her off-spring in order to secure power and that clearly was the object of Jezebel and Athaliah in becoming involved in the affairs of Judah.

Jehoram was only a pawn in the plans of Jezebel and her daughter to take control of the affairs of both kingdoms. The subsequent actions of Athaliah confirm that she harboured the ambition of ruling Judah. Jehoram allowed himself to be manipulated to this end and is portrayed in the record as a man who had little or no control of the affairs of his family or the kingdom although he manifested shrewdness in matters of self interest and self preservation.

The history of Jehoram is a long list of disasters as one problem after another came upon him until he was finally smitten by a dreaded disease which brought him to a premature and excruciating death. He fully deserved such an end because of the evils he introduced into Judah. Backed by Athaliah he embarked upon a deliberate campaign to pollute the minds and corrupt the practices of his people, thus undoing all the work of his father Jehoshaphat. It is recorded that he seduced Judah to commit adultery by introducing the vile and immoral 'worship' of Baal into his kingdom.

So incensed was Yahweh with the evils of Jehoram that he moved Elijah, who had earlier been removed from the scene in the dramatic circumstances recorded in 11 Kings 2, to send a letter of condemnation to him proclaiming his impending doom.

Jehoram was a man of the flesh whose evils were made immeasurably more gross through the influence of Athaliah and his mother-in-law, (Jezebel), than they might have been had not Jehoshaphat foolishly forged a marriage alliance with Ahab. The consequences of this marriage alliance for Jehoram, his brethren and the nation of Judah were nothing short of catastrophic and plunged God's ecclesia into one of its darkest periods. Clearly the lesson of this disaster is two-fold; (1) Fellowship boundaries which are established by departure from the Truth, doctrinally or morally must not be crossed except where evidence clearly exists that the doctrinal and moral deviations have been eradicated. (2) The selection of a marriage partner is a crucial decision in determining the direction of any persons life. Unity of mind and purpose in the things of the Truth are essential for success. It was because Jehoshaphat ignored both of these principles, that Judah was plunged into apostacy.

Jehoram was a self-seeking murderer; a corruptor of his people and a man moved by his wife to commit the grossest of evils. He died as he had lived - in the corruption of his flesh. The inspired record summarises the end of Jehoram by saying; "He departed without being desired".

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF JEHORAM'S REIGN

	<u>1 Kings</u>	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession at age 32	22:50	8:16-19	21:1
Murders his brethren			21:2-4
The divine estimation of him		8:18-19	21:5-7
The Edomites revolt against him		8:20-22	21:8-10
His idolatry and wickedness			21:11
A letter of doom from Elijah			21:12-15
Attacked by Philistines and Arabians			21:16-17
Dies a horrible death		8:23-24	21:18-20

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND MURDER OF BRETHREN 11 Chron. 21:1-4

V.1 - "reigned in his stead" - He had reigned as co-regent for 7 years - 11Kings 1:17 & 3:1. The influence of Athaliah was great and it is almost certain she had a part in securing the throne for him while Jehoshaphat still lived.

V.2 - "Azariah" - "Yah has helped".

"Jehiel" - "God will live".

"Zechariah" - "Yah hath remembered".

"Azariah" - as above.

"Michael" - "Who is like El".

"Shephatiah" - "Yah has judged".

"king of Israel" - He was the king of Judah but family ties and Athaliah's influence, plus his frequent attempts at unity with Israel put the matter in doubt.

V.3 - "because he was the firstborn" - As might be expected from Jehoshaphat - the observance of divine principles.

V.4 - "slew all his brethren" - Removal of rivals but for no purpose - Athaliah's hand observable, 11 Kings 22:10. See divine retribution, v17.

"princes of Israel" - The contemporaries and assistants of Jehoshaphat - obviously men of a different persuasion.

### DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Chron. 21:5-7

V.6 - "the way of the kings of Israel" - As might be expected. It emphasises the importance of marriage relationships being carefully considered before being entered into. The reason for apostasy is given; Athaliah was his wife. Jehoshaphat was to blame for this - he had played politics with the life of his sons and as a result lost them all.

V.7 - "Howbeit Yahweh would not destroy the house of David" - This is a clear indication that if the covenant to David had been lacking he would have destroyed Jehoram and his house. Only the covenant prevented it.

### THE REVOLT OF THE EDMITES 11 Chron. 21:8-11

V.8 - "In his days the Edomites revolted" - As a direct consequence of his iniquity - this was divine retribution.

"dominion" - YAD - a hand (indicating power or means).

"made themselves a king" - See 1 Kings 22:47.

V.9 - "and smote the Edomites" - Jehoram a cunning and skilful warrior defeated the Edomites who had encircled him. He was unable however to subjugate them.

V.10 - "Libnah" - From a root word, to be white. A city in south-eastern Judah near Adullam - a priestly city, Josh. 21:13.

"because he had forsaken Yahweh" - The cause of his troubles - Rom. 2:8-9. This was an internal revolt apparently by Levites who objected to Jehoram's corruptions. They sensed his growing weakness and took the opportunity to make a firm stand for purity.

V.11 - "high places" - Thus undoing Jehoshaphat's work, 11 Chron. 17:6,19:3 "and caused the inhabitants" - A deliberate policy aimed at demoralising and corrupting the people, Rev. 2:20.

"commit fornication" - ZANAH - to commit adultery; can be used figuratively of spiritual adultery.

"and compelled Judah thereto" - Roth.- "and seduced Judah". The word "compelled" is NADACH - to push off. Often translated as "driven" - see use in Prov. 7:21 ("forced"). This was a campaign of corruption backed by Jezebel and Athaliah, 11 Kings 17:21.

### ELIJAH'S LETTER OF CONDEMNATION 11 Chron. 21:12-15

V.12 - "there came a writing" - MIKTAB - a thing written.

"from Elijah the prophet" - Proof that Elijah was not yet dead and that he was in the vicinity of Israel. Yahweh had probably removed him elsewhere to live out his days and from there he wrote to Jehoram. As the letter is written in the past tense and records the actions of Jehoram after Jehoshaphat's death it is almost certain it was written after the events of 11 Kings 2, at which time Jehoshaphat was still alive. It is clearly a judgement based upon specific sins and not a prophecy written before the event.

"Yahweh God of David thy father" - A rebuke as well as a commentary on verse 7.

"ways of Jehoshaphat...Asa" - Reveals the divine estimation of these two kings. "Ways" indicates the practise emanating from character. It is the word DEREK - road (as trodden) fig. a course of life.

V.13 - "to go a whoring" - ZANAH - same as "fornication", verse 11.

"like to the whoredoms...house of Ahab" - He was part of the house of Ahab. Notice, "house of Ahab"; not simply "Ahab". It was Jezebel's influence through her daughter Athaliah that resulted in much of the iniquity.

"better than thyself" - Unlike Jehoram they were not connected to Ahab's house and probably would have reigned after the example of Asa and Jehoshaphat.

V.14 - "a great plague" - MAGGEPHAH - a pestilence; by anal. defeat. Youngs Lit.-"a great smiting." Lev. 26:21.

"thy people" - Many had supported him, Hos. 5:11, Mic. 6:16.

"thy children and thy wives" - As retribution for his murders.

"thy goods" - Because he probably took all the possessions of his brethren, verse 3.

V.15 - "great sickness" - CHOLIY - malady, anxiety, calamity. Used 11 Kings 1.2.

"disease" - MACHALEH - sickness.

"bowels" - ME'AH - to be soft; the intestines or the abdomen.

"bowels fall out" - Youngs Lit.- "till thy bowels come out." Said by some to be a severe form of dysentery from which apparently Antiochus Epiphanes and Herod Agrippa died.

"day by day" - His was to be a prolonged, excruciating and wretched death.

### ATTACKS BY PHILISTINES AND ARABIANS 11 Chron. 21:16-17

V.16 - "Yahweh stirred up" - This is a direct contrast with 11 Chron. 17:10-11 where the reverse was true for Jehoshaphat.

"the spirit" - In Jehoshaphat's days he had struck sudden terror upon them.

"the Ethiopians" - Another contrast - see 11 Chron. 14:13. Roth.-"who were under the direction of the Ethiopians."

V.17 - "brake into it" - Youngs Lit.- "rend it". Roth.-"and forced their way into it."

"carried away all the substance" - Youngs Lit. -"and take captive all the substance."

"his sons" - Divine poetical justice, verse 3. See 11 Chron. 22:1.

"his wives" - But not Athaliah - 11 Chron. 22:10.

"save Jehoahaz" - The name means "Yahweh seized". This was actually Ahaziah - he probably came to the throne before Jehoram's death as a co-regent, 11 Kings 9:29.

### DEATH AND OBITUARY 11 Chron. 21:18-20

V.18 - "incurable disease" - AYIN MARPE - two words meaning "not exist" and "medicine" or "cure". ie. no cure.

V.19 - "in the process of time" - Roth.-"in a year beyond a year." Time

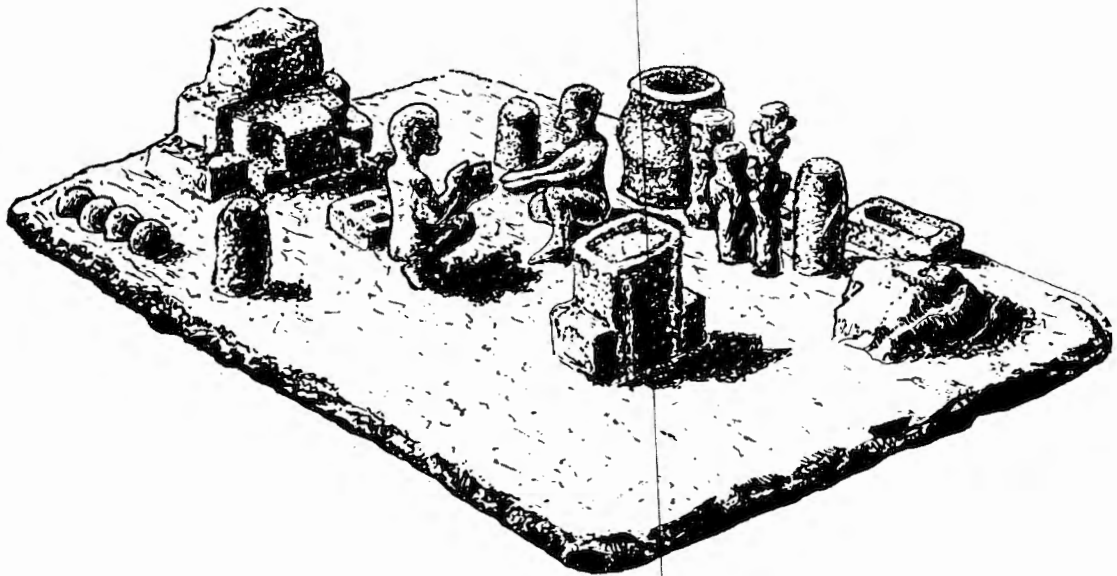
passes slowly in chronic illness - with such a debilitating disease as dysentery life would be extremely unpleasant.

"two years" - He suffered increasingly worse effects for two years - a fitting end and punishment for his sins. He had chosen corruption as a way of life; now he died in the most awful physical corruption imaginable.

"his people made no burning" - The people as a whole did not love or respect him though many succumbed to his seduction to idolatry - this is typical of human nature. See 11 Chron. 16:14.

V.20 - "departed without being desired" - Roth.- "and went his way unregretted." See 11 Chron. 23:21, Prov. 10:7. "Desired" is CHEMDAH - delight. There was still some moral fibre left in the nation, as a result of Jehoshaphat's work of education.

"Howbeit they buried him" - Roth. - "And though they buried him...yet not in the sepulchres".



A votive tray found at Susa, representing a high place with aherahs, bowls, offerings, and also, in miniature, a tower ("ziggurat") and a temple. In the middle the king, assisted by a priest, carries out a rite of purification.

"Moreover he (Jehoram) made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah thereto." 11 Chron. 21:11

# AHAZIAH -

## The Doomed Puppet

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Yah hath seized".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 8:24

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 22:11

AGE AT ACCESSION - 22 years 11 Kings 8:26  
42 years 11 Chron. 22:2

AT DEATH - 23

LENGTH OF REIGN - 1 year

During 841

FATHER - Jehoram (Judah)

MOTHER - Athaliah (Israel)

CONTEMPORARY KING - Jehoram B.C. 853-841.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The youngest son of Jehoram reigned only 1 year, and was completely overshadowed in all that he did by his infamous mother, Athaliah. Being the only survivor of Jehoram's sons he was installed on the throne of Judah as a puppet by Athaliah who had not yet resolved to seize supreme power for herself. She dominated her 22 year old son and counselled him to do wickedly after the ways of the house of Ahab. The only thing recorded concerning Ahaziah's character is that he was willing to walk in the counsel of his mother, and abandon himself to gross evils as his father had done.

Ahaziah was inseparable from the house of Ahab. He was a true son of Jezebel (his grandmother) and it was therefore fitting that he should receive divine retribution along with the rest of Ahab's house. Upon his visit to Samaria to see his convalescing uncle with whom he had recently joined in war against Syria, he was found by Yahweh's avenger, Jehu, who struck him down. As the record simply states; "The destruction (treading down) of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram".

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF AHAZIAH'S REIGN

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession at age 22	8:24-26	22:1-2
Divine estimation of his reign	8:27	22:3-4
Makes an alliance with Jehoram	8:28-29	22:5-6
The anointing of Jehu	9:1-13	22:7
Ahaziah slain by Jehu in Israel	9:27-29	22:8-9

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Chron. 22:1-4

V.1.- "inhabitants of Jerusalem" - Athaliah coveted the rulership of Judah; she acquiesced in favour of her son but did not hesitate to grasp the throne upon his death.



"slain all the eldest" - Amplifies 11 Chron.21:17 and reveals the justice of divine judgement in retribution.

V.2 - "forty and two" - Should be 22 as 11 Kings 8:26. It would be impossible to reconcile 42 in view of 11 Chron.21:5.

"Athaliah" - "Yah has constrained" - so he had, while Jehoshaphat was alive. When he died Judah quickly plunged into the apostasy of the house of Ahab under her leadership.

"daughter of Omri" - She was the grand-daughter of Omri and daughter of Ahab - so called because she was a "counsellor" of iniquity and Omri has been 'immortalised' as such, he was the renowned "statute-maker", Mic.6:16. Omri means "heaping", and Athaliah heaped up iniquity in Judah as Ahab had done in Israel.

V.3 - "ways of the house of Ahab" - The statutes were Omri's, the ways Ahab's. Note the reference is to Ahab's house - this is an obvious reference to the influence of Jezebel, 1 Kings 21:25.

"mother was his counsellor" - YA'AT - to advise, to deliberate or resolve. (used of Balak in Mic.6:5).

V.4 - "Wherefore" - This verse expands the previous verse. It was a natural consequence that with such counsel iniquity would follow.

"for they were his counsellors" - The union of the two nations was now complete - Ahaziah was completely dependant upon the house of Ahab for direction. The great kingdom of Judah which under Jehoshaphat had reached such lofty heights was now ruled by a 22 year old king under the complete domination of his evil mother and her even more evil family.

"to his destruction" - It was, literally! He was killed at the age of 23 while on a visit to Jehoram in Samaria - v9, that was where he really belonged.

### THE DEATH OF AHAZIAH 11 Chron. 22:5-9

V.5 - "to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-Gilead" - It was a sad repetition of history for a grandson of Jehoshaphat to be in a coalition with the house of Ahab fighting Syria at Ramoth-Gilead - disaster was certain.

"Hazael" - "God has seen". "Ramoth" - "High place". "Gilead" - "Heap of witness".

"Syrians smote Joram" - Following the pattern of Ahab's death, in order to fulfil Elijah's prophecy. 1 Kings 21:29.

V.6 - "Jezreel" - "God will sow".

"Azariah" - "Yah has helped" - this should read Ahaziah, "Yah hath seized" as v7 explains.

V.7 - "the destruction of Ahaziah" - TEBUNCAH - a treading down, ie. ruin, (only occurrence).

"was of God" - The hand of God was not openly visible but judgement was as certain as any divine manifestation of power. A lesson for those living under providence in times of no open display of divine judgement.

"against Jehu" - "Yah is he" - Jehoram had recovered sufficiently enough to defend his interests against internal revolt.

"Nimshi" - "extricated", from the root to pull out.

"anointed" - MASHACH - to rub with oil, ie. to anoint.

"cut off" - KARATH - to cut, to destroy or consume.

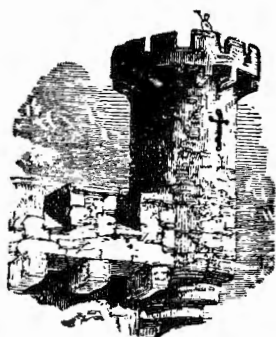
V.8 - "princes of Judah" - Ahaziah took the royal house-hold with him including the sons of his brothers of whom he had custody.

V.9 - "sought" - BAQASH - to search out, to strive after.

"caught" - LAKAD - to catch (in a net, trap or pit). Generally to capture.

"Yah is he" (Jehu) "seized him" - the meaning of the name (Ahaziah).

"hid in Samaria" - This is where he really belonged - in the house of Ahab.



WATCH-TOWER.

"And there stood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said.....!"

"....the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously."



Egyptian (above) and Assyrian Chariots

# JEHU -

## Yahweh's Avenger

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Yah is he".

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 19:16

LAST MENTION - Hos. 1:4

LENGTH OF REIGN - 28 years

From B.C. 841-814

FATHER - Jehoshaphat ("Yahweh is judge") 11 Kings 9:2

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Ahaziah B.C. 841, Athaliah B.C. 841-836, Joash B.C. 835-796.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Jehu is one of the most curious characters to appear in the record of the kings. He manifested an unquenchable zeal for Yahweh while undertaking the mission of wiping out Ahab's house, but as soon as he came to the throne he casually reintroduced the apostasy of Jeroboam and completely ignored the Law of Yahweh concerning Israel's worship. In order to ascertain his character, attention must therefore be focused on what motivated his professed zeal for Yahweh.

Jehu massacred in succession, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Jezebel, seventy sons of Ahab, forty two princes of Judah and many thousands of Baal worshippers gathered by his decree to a special conference in Samaria. The cool and calculated ruthlessness with which he accomplished the vengeance of Yahweh upon Ahab's house is a clear indication of the real essence of Jehu's character. Yahweh commended him for destroying the house of Ahab, 11 Kings 10:30, but not for the attitude he adopted in accomplishing it. Jehu relished blood-shed and derived great satisfaction from the destruction of his fellow Israelites as is revealed in the death of Ahab's seventy sons whose heads he piled up in two heaps at the gate of Jezreel, 11 Kings 10:8-11. His zeal for Yahweh was really only a cloak for a blood-thirstiness unequalled in the history of the kings; hence Yahweh declared that He would in turn "avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu" Hos. 1:4.

However, before Jehu was given an opportunity to manifest his blood-thirstiness he appears as a man of considerable ingenuity in manoeuvring himself into a position of absolute authority over the army of Israel. He was one of the captains of Jehoram who had been left to maintain the siege of Ramoth-Gilead while the king retired to Jezreel to recover from wounds received in battle. In the absence of the king, a messenger from Elisha arrived to anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi king over Israel, 1 Kings 19:16. The secretive manner of this anointing provided the backdrop for one of the most interesting revelations of character in the kings. The hasty departure of Elisha's messenger was followed by inquisitive questions from Jehu's fellow captains as to the origin and purpose of the

messenger. Jehu's reply; "Ye know the man, and his communication", is a calculated move to gain a psychological advantage over his fellows and to condition their minds to accept the revelation that he had been anointed king. It was a delicate situation masterfully handled by Jehu who is revealed in the record as a shrewd man in all the accounts of his dealings with people.

Consider the way Jehu handles the arrival of Elisha's messenger at the camp, 11 Kings 10:5, and it will be seen that Jehu was carefully working out a stratagem to seize control of the army. When the messenger came in, looked at Jehu and said; "I have an errand to thee, O captain", Jehu replied; "Unto which of all us." This was not a genuine display of humility but a calculated self-effacement to ingratiate himself with his equals so that his ambition to seize power could be concealed until exactly the right moment. He was carefully preparing the ground for a rise to the supreme authority of the monarchy which he knew was available to the man who fulfilled the prophecies of Elijah against the house of Ahab. He had heard Elijah pronounce the doom of his master's house, 11 Kings 9:25-26,36, and since that time had been waiting for the opportunity to fulfil his ambition of ruling Israel. The first step, was control of the army and this he ingeniously secured, without bloodshed. The incumbent of the throne and his house were not to be so fortunate when Jehu then moved to secure the monarchy.

Jehu was known by the characteristic driving of his chariot. It appears he drove neither at full tilt or at walking pace while traversing the countryside but rather at the canter which was the most uncomfortable way possible. As the watchman put it; "He drives like a madman". This was perhaps a testimony of his character - an ambitious man, eager to accomplish the task before him and fulfil his desire to reign, but able to suppress his eagerness only until his plans could be worked out and the doors opened for him to proceed. He then went forth with murderous haste and furious agitation to remove Ahab's house from the land of Israel.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF JEHU

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Anointed by a messenger from Elisha	9:1-10	22:7
Proclaimed king by army of Israel	9:11-13	
Conspires against the wounded Jehoram	9:14-15	
Advances on Jezreel	9:16-20	
Slays Jehoram and fulfils a prophecy	9:21-26	
Slays Ahaziah king of Judah	9:27-29	22:8-9
Slays Jezebel and fulfils a prophecy	9:30-37	
Procures the death of Ahab's 70 sons	10:1-7	
Their heads piled up at gate of Jezreel	10:8-10	
Wipes out the residue of Ahab's house	10:11	
The house of Ahaziah massacred	10:12-14	
A pact with Jehonadab the son of Rechab	10:15-17	
Massacres Baal worshippers by subterfuge	10:18-25	
Destroys Baal worship completely	10:26-28	
Reverts to the idol's of Jeroboam	10:29-31	
Attacked by Hazael of Syria	10:32-33	
Dies and is buried in Samaria	10:34-36	

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESTHE ANOINTING OF JEHU 11 Kings 9:1-10

V.1 - "Elisha" - "To whom El is salvation".  
 "children of the prophets" - Roth. "sons of the prophets".  
 "gird up thy loins" - A symbol in the Word for obtaining control of thought by the power of the Word. 1 Pet.1:13.  
 "box of oil" - Roth. "flask of oil". Youngs "vial".  
 "Ramoth-Gilead" - Two words meaning "high place"; "heap of witness".  
 Signifies that Ahab met his doom here - now his house is doomed.

V.2 - "son of Jehoshaphat" - "Yahweh is judge". It is interesting that the avenger of Yahweh should be the son of a man named "Jehoshaphat".  
 "make him arise" - Roth. "get him to rise up out of the midst of his brethren". He was probably in command of the troops in Jehoram's absence.  
 "carry him" - Roth. "take him into an inner chamber". Youngs Lit. "into the inner part of an inner chamber".

V.4 - "young man" - Emphasis of his youth. He was evidently a disciple of Elisha associated with the school of the prophets.

V.5 - "captains of the host" - Roth. "captains of the force".  
 "errand" - DABAR - a word, a matter.  
 "Jehu said" - Jehu assumes the authority of the commander in Jehoram's absence.  
 "Unto which" - Roth. "For which of us all". His position was not that of absolute commander; his question is diplomatically worded and spoken on behalf of his fellow captains. It is clear that Jehu was maneuvering himself into a position of absolute authority.

V.7 - "I may avenge" - The principle reason for divine judgement was not wickedness but the murder of Yahweh's servants. Jezebel is named as the chief object of Yahweh's anger.

V.8 - "shut up and left" - ASUR & AZAB - Probably "helpless or hindered" and "abandoned or destitute". Roth. "whether shut up or left at large".

V.10 - "dogs shall eat Jezebel" - Confirms 1 Kings 21:23.  
 "none to bury her" - Jehu intended to bury her but the prophecy was fulfilled. v34.

JEHU PROCLAIMED KING OF ISRAEL 11 Kings 9:11-15

V.11 - "this mad fellow" - Roth. "madman".  
 "ye know" - Jehu cunningly suggests that they were aware of the reason for the young prophets visit. He carefully prepared the ground for his assumption of the power of the monarchy.

V.12 - "It is false" - SEQER - a deliberate lie. Roth. "False, pray tell us". The other captains having been psychologically prepared for the announcement of Jehu's accession to the throne timidly respond to Jehu's subtle ploy.

V.13 - "under him on top of the stairs" - Roth. "upon the very steps"; ie. they hastened to manifest submission to his authority and formed a throne of their garments right at the spot where he stood.

"blew with trumpets" - SHOPHAR - Psa.47:5-6.

V.14 - "conspired" - HITQASSER - to bind ones-self, ie, as with others as confederates.

V.15 - "If it be your minds" - Roth.-"If such is your mind". Gray -"If ye are truly with me." Another demonstration of Jehu's shrewdness in handling his contemporaries.

"let none go forth" - Roth.-"let no fugitive". (Marg. "escaper" - same as Youngs Lit.) A reference to one who did not support Jehu's conspiracy.

### THE SLAYING OF JEHO RAM 11 Kings 9:16-26

V.17 - "company" - SHIPH'AH - copiousness, ie. of a crowd.

V.20 - "driving is like" - MINHAG - driving (of a chariot).

"he driveth furiously" - SHIGGA'OWN - craziness, from root SHAGA - to rave through insanity. Roth.-"for with mad haste doth he drive." Moffatt - "for he drives like a madman." Gray -"with abandon."

V.21 - "Make ready" - Roth.-"harness". It is significant that Jehoram rode in a chariot outside the city as the prophecy of Elijah required him to die in the vineyard of Naboth.

"portion of Naboth" - Roth.-"heritage of Naboth." To fulfil 1 Kings 21:19.

V.22 - "whoredoms of thy mother" - ZANUWN - adultery. Refers to ritual prostitution practised by Jezebel in the fertility cult associated with Baal worship. Note Jehu's motive for vengeance differs from verse 7.

"witchcrafts" - KESHEPH - magic, from root, to whisper; a spell, ie. to enchant or practise magic. Roth.-"incantations".

"are so many" - Roth. -"do abound."

V.23 - "turned his hands" - R.S.V. -"reigned about." He was doing his own driving and he drove towards Naboth's vineyard.

"There is treachery" - Roth.-"treachery, O Ahaziah."

V.24 - "Jehu drew a bow" - Note sig. connection with 1 Kings 22:34 ("turn thine hand"). Roth.-"bent his bow".

"with his full strength" - Gray -"with all his might."

"between his arms" - R.S.V. -"between the shoulders."

"went out at his heart" - R.S.V. - "the arrow pierced his heart."

"sunk" - KARA - to bend the knee; to sink.

V.25 - "Bidkar" - Heb. "By stabbing" ie. assassin.

"when I and thou rode together" - Roth.-"when I and thou were riding as a couple together after Ahab." Apparently Ahab had taken Jehu and Bidkar into his confidence. Ever since, Jehu had looked forward to being the one to fulfil the prophecy of Elijah.

"laid this burden" - MASSA - a burden; by imp. an utterance, chiefly a doom. Roth.-"this doom."

V.26 - "Surely I have seen yesterday" - Roth.-"Surely....have I lately seen." ie. the time was ripe for vengeance.

"blood of his sons" - There is no record of their murder in 1 Kings 21

but Jezebel had killed them along with Naboth.

"I will requite thee" - SHALAM - to be safe, fig. to be completed, by extension, to reciprocate.

"in this plat" - CHELQAH - an allotment.

### THE SLAYING OF AHAZIAH 11 Kings 9:27-29

V.27 - "garden house" - Lit. - "the house of the garden". This was probably Ahab's house near the garden of herbs he had grown in Naboth's vineyard, 1 Kings 21:2.

"Smite him also" - Roth. - "Him also - smite him in..." (emphatic).

"going up to Gur" - Meaning "a lion cub". A town evidently south of Jezreel. Having caught up to Ahaziah they severely wounded him and it seems he changed direction and headed N.W. to Megiddo, presumably because of his fatal wounds and to avoid the steep ascent into Judah. .

"Ibleam" - "Devouring fire".

"Megiddo" - "Rendezvous".

"and died there" - It is difficult to reconcile this account with 11 Chron. 22:9 which says Ahaziah was found in Samaria, brought to Jehu, slain and buried. It seems that after being wounded he fled to Megiddo (in the country of Samaria) was sought and killed by Jehu.

V.28 - "to Jerusalem" - Jehu permitted a royal burial out of respect for the standing of Jehoshaphat before Yahweh, 11 Chron. 22:9.

### THE SLAYING OF JEZEBEL 11 Kings 9:30-37

V.30 - "Jezreel" - Jezebel was in Jezreel - this was required to fulfil 1 Kings 21:23.

"painted her face" - SIYM PUWK - put (on) paint, dye; (spec. stibium for the eyes). Stibium is bluish-white in colour. Roth. - "she set her eyes in stibium." See same word Jer. 4:30, Ezek. 23:40. Jezebel's motive seems to have been to seduce Jehu, but in the heat of the moment her fierce spirit blazed out in rage against him.

"tired her head" - Roth. - "ornamented her head." The word "tired" is YATAB - to make well (lit. sound or beautiful).

"window" - Roth. - "lattice". cp. 11 Kings 1:2.

V.31 - "Had Zimri peace" - Roth. - "Was it peace, when Zimri slew his lord." R.S.V. - "Is it peace, you Zimri murderer of your master." She recalls the history of 50 years before, 1 Kings 16:9-10. There is brazen defiance in this question seeing Zimri's revolt lasted only 7 days.

V.32 - "Who is on my side" - Jehu was singleminded in his purpose - he demands support from within the palace, counting on there being some who desired the end of such a woman.

"eunuchs" - CARIC - to castrate; a eunuch. Probably palace chamberlains. This is real irony in that "the adulteress" and teacher of whoredoms should die at the hands of eunuchs (men who were impotent and disinterested in her whoredoms).

V.33 - "Throw her down" - SHAMAT - to fling down; incipiently, to jostle. Roth. - "Hurl her down."

"her blood" - She had spilt much blood - this was a fitting punishment.

"trode her under foot" - R.S.V. - "and they trampled on her." Mic. 7:10.



V.34 - "eat and drink" - This is not so much callous indifference to Jezebel's corpse but an essential meal with the nobles and leaders of the city to consolidate his position in Israel.

"Go and see this cursed woman" - Delete the word "woman". "Cursed" is ARAR - to execrate (to curse, denounce evil against). Youngs Lit. - "Look after I pray you this cursed one."

"kings daughter" - Of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, 1 Kings 16:31.

V.35 - "the skull" - GULGOLETH - a skull (as round). This stands for her THINKING - Mental.

"feet" - REGEL - a foot (as used in walking), by imp. a step. Stands for her WAYS - Moral.

"palms of her hands" - KAPH - the hollow of the hand or palm. Stands for her WORKS - Physical. See verse 7, Isa. 59:3-7, Prov. 6:17-18. The dogs having eaten most of Jezebel carried off the remainder but left the skull, feet and hands - this was a sign from Yahweh - not even dogs (who can eat their own vomit) could take things so morally corrupt. Jezebel is the archetype of all that is evil and corrupt. She was a complete manifestation of the flesh, mentally, morally and physically.

V.36 - Elijah's prophecy was fulfilled, 1 Kings 21:23.

V.37 - "carcase" - NEBELAH - a flabby thing; carcase or carrion.

"as dung" - Roth. - "become like heaps of dung."

"they shall not say" - Roth. - "so that they cannot say." ie. no grave - no memorial. Nothing was to remain of this wicked woman to remind Israel of her corruptions and idolatry.

### THE SLAUGHTER OF AHAB'S HOUSE 11 Kings 10:1-11

V.1 - "Ahab had seventy sons" - These probably included the children of Jehoram as well. Compare the entire context of this chapter with 1 Kings 21. This <sup>is</sup> divine poetical justice against Ahab's house for the murder of Naboth and his sons.

"rulers" - SAR - a head person.

"of Jezreel" - What were they doing in Samaria? cp. 1 Kings 21:8.

"them that brought up" - Roth. - "them who had been foster-parents." The word is OMENIM - to foster as parent or nurse. Where was Jezebel? She was their mother (and/or their grandmother). She was obviously preoccupied with the pleasures of her vile Baal worship and was not concerned about the upbringing of her children.

V.2 - "your masters" - ADONIM - ruler or lord. This letter was a wise move by Jehu; such a bold challenge would impress them with his strength and confidence, but leaves the way open for an honourable surrender.

V.3 - "best" - TOWB - good. Roth. - "goodliest".

"meetest" - YASHAR - straight or even. Roth. - "fittest".

"your master" - Evidently refers to Jehoram, verses 2 & 3.

"fight" - LACHAM - to battle.

V.4 - "exceedingly afraid" - Roth. - "feared they very greatly."

"two kings" - Jehoram (Israel) and Ahaziah (Judah).

V.6 - "if ye be mine" - Roth. - "if mine ye are." More cunning by Jehu.

V.7 - "baskets" - DUWD - a pot (for boiling), by resemblance of shape - a basket.

V.8 - "Lay ye them" - Youngs Lit. - "Make them two heaps."  
 "entering" - PETHACH - an opening (Lit. a door or gate). The heads were placed right in the path of all entering or leaving the city.

V.9 - "went out, and stood" - Roth. - "went out and took his stand."  
 "righteous" - Roth. - "righteous are ye." This is biting sarcasm.  
 "conspired" - QASHAR - to tie (make a league).  
 "who slew all these" - Cunningly he implicates the people and rulers in his conspiracy.

V.11 - Having gained support he now proceeds to eliminate the remainder of Ahab's house and associates.  
 "kinsfolks" - YADA - to know. Roth. - "acquaintances."  
 "none remaining" - Roth. - "not left remaining to him a survivor."

#### THE HOUSE OF AHAZIAH DESTROYED 11 Kings 10:12-14

V.12 - "shearing house" - BETH EQED - house of binding (for shearing). Note the margin of the A.V. - the word "shepherd" is RA'AH - to tend a flock. Youngs Lit. - "at the shepherds shearing house in the way."

V.13 - "Jehu met" - Roth. - "so Jehu lighted upon."  
 "brethren" - Ahaziah's brothers were dead - these were the sons of his brethren, 11 Chron. 22:8.  
 "Ahaziah" - "Yah hath seized."  
 "to salute" - SHALOM - safe, ie. well, happy, friendly. They were unaware of the coup of Jehu and its results. Their visit indicates intimate links between the two royal houses due to Athaliah's marriage to Jehoram.

V.14 - "at the pit" - Roth. - "slew them (casting them) into the pit." Thus the only survivors of either royal house were the sons of Ahaziah and soon only Joash (the youngest) remained of them.

#### JEHU'S PACT WITH JEHONADAB 11 Kings 10:15-17

V.15 - "lighted on" - MATSA - found, to meet.  
 "Jehonadab" - "Whom Yahweh impels". Jer. 35:6,8,14,19.  
 "Rechab" - Meaning "rider", root, to ride, place upon, despatch. 1 Chron. 2:55.  
 "saluted" - BARAK - to bless. Roth. - "blessed".  
 "right" - YASHAR - straight.  
 "give me thine hand" - A mark of the covenant pledging friendship and fidelity in their common objective. Contrast 1 Kings 20:33-34.

V.16 - "Come with me" - Roth. - "Do come with me."  
 "zeal" - QINAH - jealousy.

#### THE MASSACRE OF THE BAAL WORSHIPPERS 11 Kings 10:18-28

V.18 - A cunning manoeuvre to allow Baal's adherents and devotees to unwittingly walk into destruction by their own choice whilst permitting genuine worshippers of Yahweh to escape.

V.19 - "in subtilty" - GOQBAH - a trick; trickery. Roth.-"but Jehu acted craftily." The root word GAH-KAV is used "to supplant", "take by the heel", Gen. 27:36, Hos. 12:3-4.

V.20 - "proclaim" - QADASH - pronounce clean, sanctify.  
 "solemn assembly" - ATSERETH - a festival. Roth.-"Hallow ye a solemn festival."

V.21 - "full from one end to another" - Roth.-"was filled from door to door." Lit. mouth to mouth.

V.22 - "vestry" - MELTACHAH - to spread out; a wardrobe.

"vestments" - LEBUSH - a garment.

"worshippers" - ABAD - to work, to serve.

"vestments" - MALBUSH - a garment; clothing. Jehu went to extreme lengths to conceal his intentions and obviously savoured every moment of this subterfuge. He had a cool and ruthless shrewdness about him in his handling of other people. At least he took adequate precautions to ensure that no one innocent of Baal worship was destroyed.

V.23 - "search" - CHAPHAS - to seek.

V.25 - "guard" - RUWTS - to run. Roth.-"runners".

V.26 - "images" - MATSTSEBAH - a column. Roth.-"Idolatrous pillars."

V.27 - "draught-house" - MACHARESHAH - a sink. Roth.-"sewer-house." R.S.V.  
 -"latrine." ie. a public toilet. A very fitting end for a house of moral corruption.

### THE DIVINE ESTIMATION OF JEHU 11 Kings 10:29-31

V.29 - "Howbeit" - Roth.-"Nevertheless." Jehu clave to Jeroboam's apostasy. This underlines the difficulty of complete reformation once this sort of apostasy obtains a firm foothold and becomes accepted as the norm.

V.30 - "in mine heart" - Jehu's work was in fact Yahweh's work. What made him unacceptable was his relish for bloodshed and not for purity, Hos.1:4.  
 "thy children of the fourth generation" - His was the longest dynasty in Israel - nearly 100 years.

V.31 - "took no heed" - SHAMAR - to guard, protect.

"law of Yahweh" - This was his stumblingblock - he was excellent at disposing of Yahweh's enemies but neglected the positive aspects of love for the truth and divine principles. This is a revelation of his character.

"with all his heart" - He was not complete - he had no relish for genuine spiritual development. The ways of Jeroboam were his standard - he accepted them as being all that was necessary.

### JEHU'S DECLINE AND DEATH 11 Kings 10:32-36

V.32 - "In those days" - The reign of Jehu heralded a period of eclipse for Israel. It began with his submission to Shalmaneser king of Assyria in 841 B.C.

"to cut Israel short" - Roth.-"began Yahweh to make inroads in Israel."

R.S.V. - "to cut off parts of Israel." Margin A.V. - "cut off the ends." The ends were the areas of Bethel in the south and Dan in the north - these two places were the home of Jeroboam's golden calves.

"Hazeal" - His campaigns probably came late in Jehu's reign as he had to contend with Assyria in the north as well as did Jehu.

V.33 - "Jordan" - "The descender".

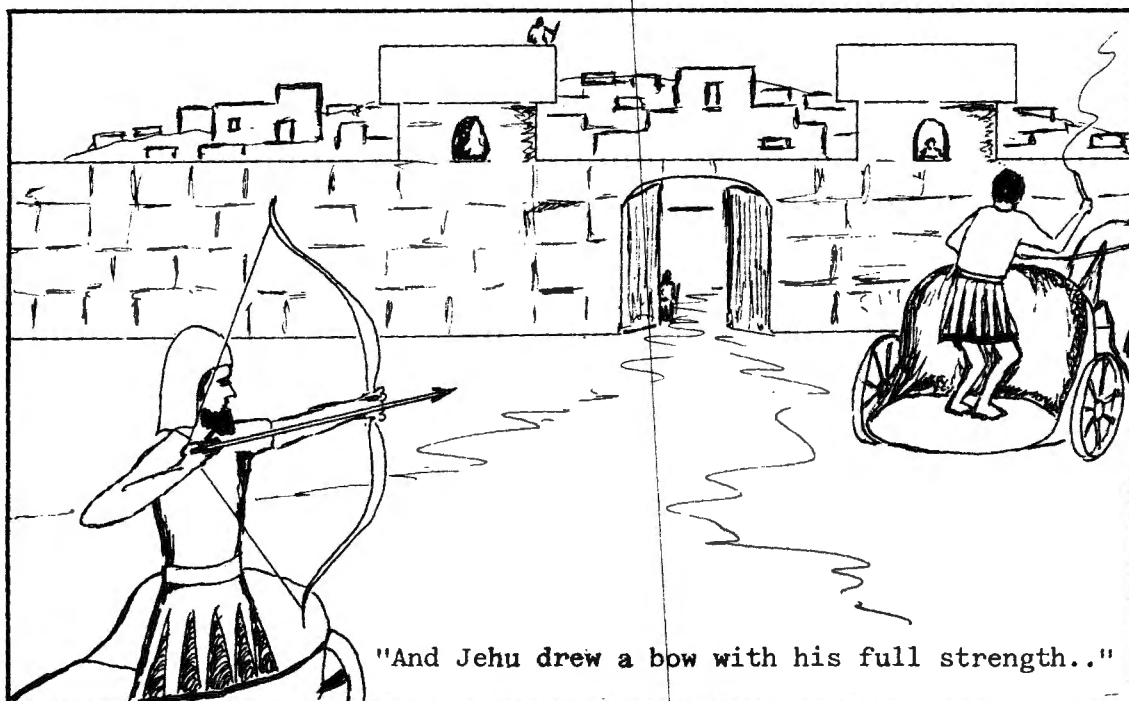
"eastward" - Roth. - "towards sunrise."

"Gilead" - "Heap of witness". "Aroer" - "Nudity" (of situation).

"Arnon" - "A brawling (stream)".

"even" - Roth. - "both Gilead and Bashan."

"Bashan" - "soft, sandy soil."



Jehu Bringing Tribute to Shalmaneser, King of Assyria

## TAPE RECORDINGS AVAILABLE ON THE KINGS OF ISRAEL & JUDAH

Tape recordings of the series of studies on the kings of Israel and Judah mentioned in the preface are available from the Wilston Christadelphian Ecclesial Tape Service, c/- Bro. D. MacKinnon, 15 Rosanne Street, Aspley, Qld, 4034.

The titles of the studies and the scriptural reading for each are listed below. Only those kings considered in this set of notes are listed. The remainder will be listed at the end of Volume two, God willing.

<u>Study No.</u>	<u>Title</u>
1.	Background to the Kings - 1 Sam. 9
2.	The subsequent influence of Saul, David and Solomon - Deut. 17
3.	Rehoboam - the Indiscreet - 1 Kings 12
4.	The apostacy of Rehoboam - The emergence of Jeroboam - 1 Kings 11:26-43
5.	Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin - 1 Kings 12: 25 to 13:19
6.	The tragic death of the man of God - Jeroboam's demise - 1 Kings 13:11-34
7.	Abijah the Belligerent - 11 Chron. 13
8.	Asa - Judah's first reformer - 11 Chron. 14
9.	Nadab, Elah, Baasha, Omri, Zimri - 1 Kings 15:25 - 16:28
10.	The young and powerful Jehoshaphat - 11 Chron. 17
11.	Famine in Israel - The rise of Ahab and the appearance of Elijah 1 Kings 16:15 - 17:7
12.	The spirit and power of Elijah at Zarephath and Carmel - 1 Kings 17:8 - 18:40
13.	The dramatic lesson of Elijah on Mt. Horeb - 1 Kings 19
14.	Ahab at war with Benhadad - 1 Kings 20
15.	The doom of the house of Ahab - The fatal alliance - 1 Kings 21
16.	The disaster at Ramoth-Gilead and the aftermath - 11 Chron. 18: 12-34
17.	The power of faith and praise - Jehoshaphat's victory over Moab - 11 Chron. 20
18.	Fire from heaven and water in the wilderness - Divine justice and mercy revealed - 11 Kings 1
19.	The life and character of Jehoram and of Ahaziah of Judah - 11 Chron. 21
20.	I will kill her children with death - The rise of Jehu - 11 Kings 9
21.	The reign of Jehu and the accession of Athaliah - 11 Kings 10:18 - 11:3