

# THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

VOLUME TWO

# CONTENTS

## Page No.

2.	Foreword
3.	Athaliah - "That wicked woman" (Judah)
7.	Joash - The Ungrateful Dependant (Judah)
14.	Amaziah - The Offensive Infidel (Judah)
19.	Jehoahaz - The Oppressed Idolator (Israel)
21.	Jehoash - The Indifferent Deliverer (Israel)
23.	Jeroboam - The Militant Restorer (Israel)
25.	Uzziah - The Presumptuous Pragmatist (Judah)
32.	Why Matthew excluded four rulers
33.	Jotham - The Upright (Judah)
35.	Ahaz - The Perfidious Idolator (Judah)
42.	Zachariah - The Unfortunate (Israel)
43.	Shallum - The Ephemeral (Israel)
44.	Menahem - The Rapacious Exactor (Israel)
45.	The kings of Assyria and the rulers of Babylon
46.	Pekaiah - The Obscure (Israel)
47.	Pekah - The Contemptible (Israel)
49.	Hoshea - The Treacherous (Israel)
51.	Hezekiah - Yahweh's Trusting Servant (Judah)
75.	Manasseh - The Murderous Corruptor (Judah)
80.	Amon - The Reprobate (Judah)
82.	Josiah - The Youthful Reformer (Judah)
101.	Jehoahaz - The Preferred (Judah)
103.	Jehoiakim - The Arrogant Tyrant (Judah)
107.	Jehoiachin - The Helpless (Judah)
109.	Zedekiah - The Profane Rebel (Judah)
111.	History from the death of Josiah to the fall of Jerusalem.
112.	Tape recordings available on the kings of Israel and Judah.



# FOREWORD

It is with thanks to those who assisted in the preparation and printing of the Kings of Israel and Judah Volume two that the publishers now present it to the Brotherhood along with Volume one which appeared six months ago. Volume two covers the reigns of the Kings of Israel who presided over the decline and eventual demise of the Northern Kingdom in the days of Hoshea and follows the fluctuating fortunes of the kingdom of Judah as righteous and evil kings sat upon David's throne until finally the wickedness of kings like Ahaz, Manasseh and the sons of Josiah brought about its tragic end.

The kings considered are :-

Israel - Jehoahaz to Hoshea (9)

Judah - Athaliah to Zedekiah (14)

The period of history considered in these notes make an exciting and profitable study and it is hoped that they will provide assistance to all who make a diligent study of the lives of the leaders of God's ecclesia in that era. The lives of great men such as Hezekiah and Josiah are worthy of careful and extended consideration and will yield some of the finest and most powerful lessons to be found in the Word of God.

The Publishers wish to emphasise that this volume and that which preceded it are verse by verse notes and will therefore be of greater use to the Bible student doing his own study of the subject. To others these notes on Kings may be a useful reference work when reading the books of Kings and Chronicles.

May the study of the Kings of Israel and Judah help us all to avoid the errors of the many rulers who failed to fulfil their solemn responsibilities and emulate those who courageously upheld the principles of Truth in their own lives and were "valiant for the Truth" in the ecclesia of God. A study of this portion of God's Word cannot fail to develop within us a more earnest anticipation of the return of "He whose right it is " to sit upon David's throne.

J.A. Cowie



# ATHALIAH -

## 'That wicked woman'

HEBREW - "Yah hath constrained".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 8:26

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 24:7

LENGTH OF REIGN - 6 years

From B.C. 841-836

FATHER - Ahab (Israel) "Resembling the father"

MOTHER - Jezebel (Zidon) "Chaste"

BROTHERS - Ahaziah and Jehoram (Israel)

CONTEMPORARY KING - Jehu B.C. 841-814.

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - 11 Chron. 24:7

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The epithet "That wicked woman" is the divine summary of Athaliah the daughter of Jezebel, 11 Chron. 24:7. She is distinguished in the record of Kings for two acts that amply sum up the achievements of her rule. The murder of all the children of the royal household excepting the baby Joash who narrowly escaped death through the intervention of the faithful Jehoshabeath, illustrates the murderous contempt of Athaliah for Yahweh and the seed of David who were to occupy the throne in accordance with the promise made to David. During her career, firstly as the wife of Jehoram and the dominating mother of Ahaziah, and then as sole ruler of Judah she manifested utter contempt and bitter hatred of the things associated with Yahweh and His covenant with David and sought to expunge the Truth from the minds of the people of Judah. In enticing the people away from the things of God she was effectively committing "murder" on a massive scale after the pattern established in the brutal slaying of the royal seed.

The second thing noted of Athaliah was that she "had broken up the house of God" and dedicated all of its vessels of service to Baalim. This was true of the temple, but also of the nation as a whole who constituted "the house of God". Athaliah worked to break up God's ecclesia and to turn its living "vessels of service" to the worship of Baalim. It was as well for Judah that she only partially succeeded in fulfilling this objective for surely Yahweh would have terminated the history of Judah as a kingdom much sooner than he did.

The appalling condition into which Judah had fallen because of Jehoshaphat's foolish policies towards the house of Ahab is fully revealed during the 6 dark years of Athaliah's reign. How low Judah had slipped, that

Athaliah of Judah

a vile and corrupt woman, the daughter of Jezebel, the most hateful woman in scripture, should sit on the throne once occupied by David and Solomon. Not even the idol-conditioned and spiritually apathetic people of Judah were able to tolerate such a state of affairs and rejoiced when Jehoiada overthrew the hated usurper and had her slain after 6 years in which he was preparing the child Joash to be brought forth to the people. It is significant that Athaliah reigned six years - the number of man and the flesh - and that upon her death the record states "all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet"; both the land and the people were enjoying a welcome sabbath. (the seventh year).

HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF ATHALIAH'S RULE

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Seizes power upon the death of Ahaziah	11:1-3	22:10-12
Reigns for six years	11:3	22:12
Jehoiada prepares to overthrow her	11:4-11	23:1-10
Joash crowned as king	11:12	23:11
She rushes into the temple	11:13-14	23:12-13
Is slain by the king's horse gate	11:15-16	23:14-15
Jehoiada destroys her idolatry	11:17-18	23:16-17
The kingdom is set in order	11:19-21	23:18-21

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESATHALIAH'S SEIZURE OF POWER 11 Chron. 22:10-12

V.10 - "mother of Ahaziah" - A significant phrase - effective power was in her hands and her indomitable spirit ruled her children as illustrated by 11 Chron.24:7.

"her son" - Her direct link to power thus severed, she hastened to accomplish the only alternative. Notice there is no sorrow or mourning for her son, or brothers. The rise of Jehu did not deter her ambitions, nor did the fact that "the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom", v9. She soon established complete control and some political stability continued for 6 years.

"destroyed" - DABAR - to arrange, figuratively to speak; rarely (in a destructive sense) to subdue. An unnatural and despicable act, Cp. Isa. 49:15.

"seed royal" - Youngs Lit. "seed of the kingdom": ie. the children of Ahaziah. There could not have been many and they could have been no older than 8 or 9 as Ahaziah died aged 23.

V.11 - "But" - The Davidic promise was threatened and Yahweh will always provide himself with a man or woman in a time of crisis such as this.

"Jehoshabeath" - "Yahweh sworn" (Strong's). Gesen. "Whose oath is Yahweh", ie. she who swears by Yahweh, hence worships and serves him. She is referred to 3 times and each time as the daughter of king Jehoram; hence it seems she was not the daughter of Athaliah but of another wife. Her faithfulness to Yahweh is obvious.

"Joash" - "Yahweh - fired".

"Ahaziah" - "Whom Yah hath seized".

"stole" - GANAB - to thief by implication to deceive.

"that were slain" - Roth. "that were being slain". This translation serves to highlight the urgency of the situation.

"nurse" - YANAQ - to suck; to give milk. Joash was probably 6-9 months old.

"bedchamber" - MITTAH - a bed (as extended) for sleeping or eating. The word always refers to a "bed". Youngs Lit. "Into the inner part of the bed-chambers".

"Jehoram" - "Yahweh raised".

"wife of Jehoiada" - "Yahweh known". Gesen. "Whom Yahweh cares for". A Levitical priest married to a princess of Judah - typical of a king-priest. 11 Chron. 24:16. This marriage confirms Jehoshabeath as a righteous and faithful woman - a product of Jehoshaphat's work of education.

"for she was the sister of Ahaziah" - given as a reason also for her action. She had ready access to the palace.

"hid" - CATHAR - to hide (by covering).

"from Athaliah" - Roth. "from the face of Athaliah".

V.12 - "house of God" - He was moved from the bed-chamber in the King's palace to the safety of the Temple and Jehoiada's care.

"six years" - Athaliah's reign of 6 years - ie. fleshly - a type of the "Lawless one", 11 Chron.24:7 (The religious system of the "mother of harlots"), in power for 6 milleniums and to be overthrown by the King-priest (Christ) in the 7th Millenium. 11 Chron.23:1.

"reigned over the land" - But not over the people of the land - see 11 Chron. 23:21.

### JEHOIADA PROCLAIMS JOASH KING 11 Chron. 23:1-11

V.1 - "Jehoiada" - "Yahweh known", "Whom Yahweh cares for".

"strengthened" - CHAZAQ - to fasten upon, to seize, be strong. He saw the opportunity and seized it.

"Azariah" - "Yah has helped".

"Jeroham" - "compassionate".

"Ishmael" - "God will hear".

"Jehohanan" - "Yahweh favoured". Connect 11 Chron.17:15.

"Obed" - "serving".

"Maaseiah" - "work of Yah".

"Adaiah" - "Yah has adorned".

"Elishaphat" - "God of Judgement".

"Zichri" - "memorable" - connect 11 Chron.17:16.

"covenant" - RSV. "entered into a compact". 5 men entered into a contract.

V.2 - Illustrates that feeling against Athaliah was strong. It required only strong leadership and the support of the armed forces to overthrow her.

V.3 - "covenant with the king" - Compare 11 Kings 11:4 which says they made a covenant with Jehoiada - in a very real sense he was the "king".

"kings son" - Compare 11 Kings 11:4 which says he "shewed" them the kings son.

V.4 - "on the sabbath" - When the people gathered for the normal sabbath worship it provided a good cover as well as an opportunity to anoint Joash before all the people.

V.5 - "gate of the foundation" - YECOWD - a foundation. Called Sur in 11 Kings 11:6, meaning in Heb. "turned off" ie. deteriorated.

V.7 - "compass" - NAQAPH - to knock together, ie. surround.

V.8 - "dismissed not the courses" - These were the 24 courses of Priests serving one week ending on the Sabbath. They were chosen by lot. 1 Chron. 24:1-19 Luke 1:8. The outgoing priests were retained so as to build up sufficient numbers for the impending coronation.

V.10 - "temple" - Roth.-"house"; as it should be.

V.11 - "the testimony" - EDUWTH - testimony. A copy of the Law, Isa. 8:16&20. The only basis for a successful rule, Deut. 17:18-20.

"crown" - NEZER - something set apart; from root NAZAR - to hold aloof, to dedicate. This word is the root of the word Nazarite. Joash was being dedicated to a life of service to Yahweh based upon the Word.

"God save the king" - Roth.-"may the king live".

### ATHALIAH SLAIN 11 Chron. 23:12-15

V.12 - "running" - RUWTS - to run (espec. to rush).

V.13 - "such as taught to sing praise" - Roth.- "and such as led the offerings of praise".

"treason" - QESHER - an alliance (usually unlawful).

V.14 - "of the ranges" - Roth.-"Take her forth within the ranks". R.S.V. - "between the ranks".

V.15 - "So they laid hands on her" - Roth. & R.V. have - "So they made way for her".

"the horse gate" - Evidently not the horse gate of the city wall but one entering the king's house.

### THE KINGDOM SET IN ORDER BY JEHOIADA 11 Chron. 23:16-21

V.16 - "that they should be Yahweh's people" - This was always in doubt while Athaliah ruled because of her corruptions.

V.17 - The response evoked in the people was active and genuine.

"house of Baal" - Long since destroyed out of Israel but still in Judah - the awful legacy of compromise by Jehoshaphat.

"Mattan" - "A present".

V.18 - "offices" - Roth. -"oversight".

"distributed" - Roth. - "set by courses".

V.20 - "high gate" - Roth. - "Upper gate", also supported by R.S.V.

V.21 - "rejoiced" - SAMEACH - blithe or gleeful.

"quiet" - SHAQAT - to repose.

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# JOASH -

## The Ungrateful Dependant

HEBREW - "Yahweh-fired".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 11:2

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 25:25

LENGTH OF REIGN - 40 years

From B.C.835-796

AGE AT ACCESSION - 7 years

AT DEATH - 47

FATHER - Ahaziah ("Yah hath seized")

MOTHER - Zibiah ("A female gazelle")

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Jehu B.C. 841-814, Jehoahaz B.C. 813-797, Jehoash B.C. 796-781.

SIGNIFICANT - Omission in genealogy of Matt. 1.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Joash is one of the great tragedies of the period of the kings. His early reign under the spiritual guidance of Jehoiada marked a turning point in Judah's history. The dark days of Athaliah's rule and the supremacy of Ahab's house in the affairs of the royal house of Judah came to an abrupt end with the death of "that wicked woman" and the accession at the age of seven of the sole and rightful heir to David's throne. The firm and wise hand of Jehoiada the high priest guided both the young king and the nation to a return to the purity of the Truth and faithful service to Yahweh which had suffered dreadfully through neglect under the successive reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah and Athaliah, who had promoted the idolatrous Baal worship of the house of Ahab. All went well until the death of Jehoiada and then the real character of Joash was revealed with tragic results for him and the nation.

Jehoiada the High Priest was the uncle of Joash by his marriage to Jehoshabeath the sister of Ahaziah the young king's father. During the early years of Joash's reign he was virtually king, as the young child would have been incapable of ruling Judah from the age of seven. In his capacity as "king-priest" Jehoiada was the strength and the conscience of God's ecclesia as it slowly recovered from the apostasy of Joash's predecessors. While Jehoiada stood behind Joash he reigned well and the nation responded to his reforms and his efforts to repair the temple. Princes and people alike willingly and joyfully contributed to the repairing of the temple and such was Joash's enthusiasm for the project that he was moved to censure his uncle for what he interpreted as procrastination.

However, Joash's zeal and enthusiasm for Yahweh were shallow and shortlived. When the towering presence of Jehoiada was removed by old



age the young king who had been dependent upon his uncle all his life was suddenly thrust upon his own resources, and when the first test came he was found wanting. The moral conscience of the nation was gone and the princes of Judah who had responded to the imposing stature of Jehoiada in divine things knew that Joash did not possess the same depth of character nor the old priest's unshakeable faithfulness to Yahweh. They perceived that Joash was not an individual in his own right and that he had been entirely dependent upon his mentor and guide for direction and strength. Sensing that the time was right to uncover their real sympathies they approached Joash with a proposal to reintroduce the idolatrous and fleshly worship of Asherah which Jehoiada had removed.

The sensual pleasures associated with the idol-worship in the high places had not been forgotten and the princes of Judah sought a return to the open "religion" of the high places with all its subtle attractions for the flesh. Jehoiada would not have tolerated such a thing and they knew it, but now he was gone and they were sure that the Truth did not run as deep in Joash as it had in his uncle. They were right and Joash succumbed to their pressure and immediately proceeded to undo all the good of his early years.

Yahweh sent prophets to warn Joash of the consequences of his apostasy but he and the princes of Judah were unmoved until the spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada who had become the High Priest upon the death of his father. So vehemently did Zechariah condemn the rulers of Judah for their apostasy that they conspired against him and secured his death by commandment of the king. Joash had turned a full circle - from a child totally dependent upon Jehoiada he had now become a ruthless murderer through the influence exerted upon him by the princes of Judah. The result was the death of a man (his own cousin) who was endeavouring to uphold the same principles which his father had taught Joash. This fully illustrates how shallow his character was and reveals him as a man who was easily influenced to do good or evil depending on the prevailing attitudes of those with whom he associated.

Joash the boy-king and Zechariah the High-priest elect had shared the same home and received the same education from Jehoiada. They were cousins and it is possible that they had grown up together and yet in the crisis Joash "remembered not the kindness" of Jehoiada without whom he could not have reigned, but "slew his son". Thus the record presents him as being callously ungrateful as well as being shallow.

The demise of Joash was fitting. A small army from Syria decimated Judah's forces and slew the princes who had been partners in Joash's crimes. The invading forces left Joash weakened and helpless and this tragic king met death at the hand of those upon whom he was dependent in his distress - his own servants.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF JOASH

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Rescued from Athaliah by Jehoshabeath	11:1-3	22:10-12
Crowned king at the age of seven	11:4-12	23:1-11
Jehoiada organises his kingdom	11:17-21	23:16-21
Reigns well under Jehoiada	12:1-3	24:1-3
Collects money to repair Temple	12:4-6	24:4-5
Rebukes Jehoiada for delay	12:7-8	24:6-7
Collection taken up in Temple	12:9-10	24:8-11
Repairs to Temple completed	12:11-16	24:12-14
Jehoiada dies aged 130		24:15-16

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
The princes seduce him into idolatry		<u>24:17-18</u>
Yahweh sends prophets to rebuke him		24:19
Zechariah son of Jehoiada rebukes him		24:20
Zechariah stoned in the Temple court		24:21-22
Invaded by Hazael king of Syria	12:17-18	24:23-24
Slain by his own servants	12:19-21	24:25-26
Final summary		24:27

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Chron. 24:1-3

V.1 - "Beer-sheba" - "Well of the oath".

V.2 - "all the days of Jehoiada" - A significant statement - Jehoiada was virtually king and while his influence remained Joash reigned well.

V.3 - "Jehoiada took" - Even in the selection of Joash's wives Jehoiada took charge. Joash could not have received a better start. All the influences brought to bear upon him in his early years were carefully guided by the wise and faithful High Priest (his uncle).

#### 11 Kings 12:1-3

V.1 - "seventh year of Jehu" - As Joash was only seven this means he must have been only a few months old at Athaliah's accession.

V.2 - "Jehoiada the priest instructed him" - YARA - to flow as water, ie. to rain; fig. to point out, hence to teach. Translated "rain" Hos. 10:12, "teaching" 11 Chron. 15:3.

V.3 - "high places" - These remained and effectively decentralised Judah's worship. This was a legacy of Jehoshaphat's compromise with the house of Ahab.

#### JOASH REPAIRS THE TEMPLE 11 Chron. 24:4-14

V.4 - "minded" - IM LEB - in conjunction with the heart. Roth.-"that was near the heart of Joash". As a young man Joash responded to Jehoiada's instruction with youthful enthusiasm.

"to repair" - CHADASH - to be new; to rebuild. Roth.-"renew".

V.5 - "hasten" - MAHAR - to be liquid, flow easily ie. hurry.

V.6 - "collection" - MASETH - tribute.

V.7 - "sons of Athaliah" - These were the sons lost to Jehoram in 11 Chron. 21:17, the brothers of Ahaziah - see also 11 Chron. 22:8.

"wicked woman" - MIRSHA'ATH - a female wicked doer. Roth.-"Athaliah the lawless". She was an exact replica of her mother Jezebel.

"dedicated" - Roth.- "hallowed".

"bestow" - Roth. -"offered". R.S.V. -"also used all".

V.9 - "a proclamation" - QOL - call, a voice or sound.

V.10 - "princes" - These later had a change of heart, verse 17.

V.12 - "service" - Roth. - "labouring".

"wrought" - Roth. - "fashioners".

"mend" - CHAZAQ - repair.

V.13 - "the work was perfected" - "Perfected" is ALAH ARUKAH - to ascend; to wholeness. Roth. - "the work of restoration went forward".

"in his state" - Roth. - "they caused the house of God to stand forth forth according to its due proportions".

"strengthened it" - Roth. - "made it strong". The work of rebuilding and strengthening the Temple was typical of the strengthening of the ecclesia.

V.14 - "to offer" - Roth. - "bowls".

"all the days of Jehoiada" - Again it is emphasised that he was the mainstay and the force behind Joash's dedication.

#### 11 Kings 12:4-16

V.4 - "every one that passeth" - Roth. - "one who transgresseth".

"every man is set at" - Roth. - "the silver of their persons by the estimate of each one". Cp. Ex. 30:12-13 & Lev. 27:2.

"cometh into any man's heart" - Lit. "come up upon his heart". ie. a free-will offering.

V.5 - "of his acquaintance" - MAKKAR - an acquaintance. Gray suggests the meaning of the word is "assessor", ie. a trader. Hence a minor Levitical Temple official who assisted the priests.

"breaches" - BEDEQ - a gap or leak.

V.6 - "three and twentieth year" - Joash was now 30 and Jehoiada extremely old. Perhaps his motive in rebuking Jehoiada was to re-assert the authority of the king seeing that he had long since been subordinate to the High Priest.

V.13 - Cp. 11 Chron. 24:14. No vessels were made until completion of the repairs on the Temple.

V.15 - "faithfully" - EMUNAH - firmness; fig.-security; morally,-fidelity.

V.16 - "trespass money" - See Lev. 5:15.

#### JEHOIADA DIES - JOASH'S APOSTASY 11 Chron. 24:15-22

V.15 - "full of days" - "Full" is SABEA - fill to satisfaction. Roth. - "and became satisfied with days".

"hundred and thirty" - This means he must have been 100 when Joash was born - 7 (Athaliah's reign) + 23 (11 Kings 12:6) = 30 years before.

V.16 - "among the kings" - He had virtually been king for 30 years. He stands in the record as the typical "king-priest". He was married to Ahaziah's sister a princess of Judah. Contrast Joash's death and burial, verse 25.

"toward God" - Vital and necessary for success - he had as his motive in all that he did - the desire to please God.

"toward his house" - In our case a type of the ecclesia. Jehoiada's priorities were right - God first, responsibilities to family, second; ecclesial responsibilities, third. Governing all these responsibilities was his desire to perform the divine will.

V.17 - "after the death of Jehoiada" - He was the one great obstacle to those who wished to liberalise their religion.

"princes of Judah" - SAR - a head person. These were men of authority and influence in the nation. The same class who supported Joash and Jehoiada in repairing the Temple, verse 10.

"obeisance" - SHACHAH - to depress; prostrate. This was more than homage for it had an ulterior motive. Joash succumbed to the pressure applied by these devious flatterers who sought to apostasise.

"hearkened" - SHAMA - to hear intelligently; give obedience.

V.18 - "left" - AZAB - to loosen; ie. to relinquish. Used verse 25.

"groves" - ASHERAH - happy; from root to be straight. A Phoenician goddess (also known as Astarte) - the corrupt worship of idols introduced by Athaliah had left an indelible mark; they could not leave it alone because of its attraction to the flesh.

"idols" - ATSAB - an idolatrous image.

"trespas" - ASHMAH - guiltiness; a fault.

V.19 - "testified" - UWD - to duplicate or repeat, by imp. to protest, testify (as by reiteration). Compare this entire context with Matt. 23:34-39, Luke 11:49-51.

### THE INTERPRETATION OF MATTHEW 23:35

The interpretation of Matt. 23:35 has always been a problem because of its apparent reference to this context in Chronicles but its naming also of "Zacharias son of Barachias" who is not Zechariah the son of Jehoiada of 11 Chron. 24:20..

●The established facts are :-

1. The only record in scripture of a Zechariah being slain in the Temple is contained in 11 Chron. 24:20-22.
2. The parallel record in Luke 11:51 omits reference to "Barachias".
3. Zechariah the son of Berechiah was the prophet Zechariah of whom nothing is recorded concerning his death.

●Some suggested solutions are as follows :-

1. Josephus records that Zechariah the prophet was slain in the manner described in Matt. 23:35 according to Jewish tradition.
2. Some commentators suggest Christ's words were a prophecy of the death by stoning in the Temple court of a prophet named Zechariah 36 years later, (Josephus Wars IV,5,4).
3. Other commentators suggest that "Barachias" is an interpolation by scribes who thought it impossible that Christ could have meant Zechariah the son of Jehoiada who died some 800 years before his time and was succeeded by many prophets who were killed by the Jews.
4. Still others suggest that "Barachias" was a second name for Jehoiada; it being a Jewish practise to have two names.

●The writer of these notes holds the view that the Lord was referring to Zechariah the son of Jehoiada and the account of his death in 11 Chron. 24:20-22, for the following reasons :-

1. The omission of "Barachias" in the parallel record of Luke 11:51 lends weight to the suggestion that it is an interpolation in Matt. 23.
2. The Lord draws heavily upon the context of 11 Chron. 24 as a careful reading of that chapter, Matt. 23 and Luke 11 reveals.

3. Christ portrays Zechariah (the High-priest elect and also a son of David through his mother) as a type of himself - note, "the spirit of God came upon Zechariah". Cp. also "which stood above the people", with Matt. 23:37 ("how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings").

4. Note the reference to "stoning" in Matt. 23:37 and cp. 11 Chron. 24:21.

5. The most conclusive evidence however is found in the final words of Luke 11:51, "It shall be required of this generation" which is an obvious reference to the last words of Zechariah, 11 Chron. 24:22; "Yahweh look upon it, and require it". Note that Zechariah means "Yah hath remembered" and Jehoiada means "Yahweh knoweth".

6. Finally, the Syrian invasion in which Joash and the leaders of Judah were destroyed was an ample type of the judgements Christ was to bring upon his murderers by the Roman Legions in A.D. 66-70.

V.20 - "spirit of God" - Apart from here, only said of Azariah elsewhere in the record of the Kings, 11 Chron. 15:1.

"came upon" - LABESH - to wrap around, by imp. to put on a garment or clothe ones self. Roth. - "clothed". R.S.V. - "took possession". Judges 6:34, 1 Chron. 12:18, Job 29:14, Isa. 59:17, Zech. 3:3&5.

"Zechariah" - "Yah hath remembered", Luke 11:51.

"which stood above the people" - Roth. - "and he took his stand above the people". Ygs Lit. - "standeth over against the people". Connect hen gathering chickens Matt. 23:37.

"why transgress" - R.S.V. - "why do ye transgress the commandments of Yahweh, so that ye cannot prosper". They could not hope for blessing or prosperity because of their deliberate apostasy.

"forsaken" - AZAB - to loosen, ie. relinquish. A demonstration of the principle of James 4:8 in reverse. Cp. context Matt. 23:37-38.

V.21 - "conspired" - QASHAR - to tie (gird, compact) make a league.

"in the court" - Cp. Luke 11:51. This was the place where the collection for the Temple was taken up. Zechariah was the nearest blood relative of Joash. They were cousins - Zechariah was also High Priest; he was slain in the Temple court by Joash in the very place where Joash had been taken to save him from murder by Athaliah.

V.22 - "remembered" - ZACHAR - to mark (so as to be recognised) ie. to remember.

"kindness" - CHESSED - favour, grace, mercy. Roth. - "lovingkindness". This crime was all the more gross for the reasons cited above. He owed his life to Jehoiada but murdered his son for doing what Jehoiada would have done. Joash forsook his early education but Zechariah did not.

"Jehoiada" - "Yahweh knoweth".

"when he died" - Roth. - "as he died".

"Yahweh look upon it" - RA'AH - to see. Roth. & R.S.V. - "see".

"require" - DARASH - to tread or frequent; ie. to follow (in pursuit). R.S.V. - "Yahweh see and avenge". Connect Luke 11:51 ("required of this generation"). This context is a remarkable parable of Yahweh's work with Israel and the raising up of His son - his subsequent murder and the divine revenge upon his murderers.



SYRIAN INVASION - DEATH OF JOASH 11 Chron. 24:23-26

V.23 - "at the end of the year" - Roth. - "when the year had gone round".  
 "host of Syria" - This attack by Syria followed an earlier expedition in which Joash just managed to stave off Hazael by denuding his kingdom of treasures - see 11 Kings 12:17-18. Such a display of weakness doubtless encouraged Hazael to try again. Note Hazael means "God has seen" which fits this context remarkably.

"destroyed all the princes" - SHACHATH - to decay, ruin. Thus they received a just reward for their part in the apostasy of Judah and the murder of Zechariah, verse 17. Note the emphasis of vengeance upon the princes, "from among the people". These were a type of the leaders of Israel in Christ's day who were all sought out and punished by Yahweh. ("Ways of Prov." Pg. 220)  
 "Damascus" - DARMESEK - the capital of Syria.

V.24 - "a small company" - Roth. - "although with a comparatively few men".  
 "Yahweh delivered" - It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, Heb. 10:31.

"executed judgement" - Yahweh is not averse to using the wicked as instruments to dispense His judgements when necessary, Isa. 13:3&17.

V.25 - "they left him in great diseases" - R.S.V. - "leaving him sorely wounded".

"conspired" - QASHAR - tie (gird, compact). This was divine poetic justice for verse 21.

"for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada" - Should be "son". It reads as though his servants took vengeance on him for Zechariah's murder but in view of verse 26 it may be that they had other motives and this was Yahweh's vengeance, verse 22.

"not in the sepulchres of the kings" - The peoples estimation of him was low - connect and contrast verse 16 and note his omission from Matt. 1.

V.26 - "Zabad" - "Giver", root - to confer (An Ammonite).

"Shimeath" - "Annunciation", root - sound, rumour, announcement.

"Jehozabad" - "Yahweh-endowed". (A Moabite)

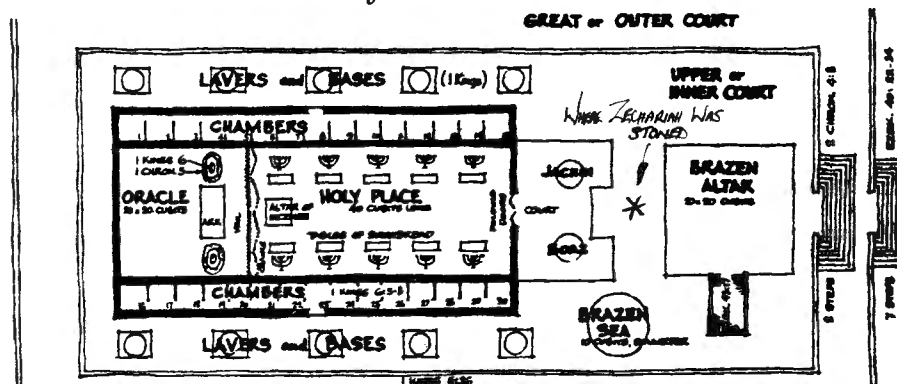
"Shimrath" - "Female guard", root - watchful.

THE EPILOGUE 11 Chron. 24:27

V.27 - "the greatness of the burdens laid upon him" - R.S.V. - "the many oracles against him".

"repairing" - YECOWD - a foundation.

"story" - MIDRASH - an investigation, ie. by imp. a treatise or elaborate compilation. R.S.V. - "commentary".



# AMAZIAH - The Offensive Infidel

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Strength of Yah". Root, to be alert.

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 12:21

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 26:4

LENGTH OF REIGN - 29 years

From B.C. 795-767

AGE AT ACCESSION - 25 years

AT DEATH - 54

FATHER - Joash ("Yahweh-fired")

MOTHER - Jehoadan ("Yahweh-pleased")

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Jehoash B.C. 796-781, Jeroboam B.C. 781-754.

SIGNIFICANT - Omitted from genealogy of Matt. 1.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The epithet "The offensive infidel" seems at first sight too severe an indictment of a king who is assessed by Yahweh's recorder with the words, "he did that which was right in the sight of Yahweh, but not with a perfect heart". This divine estimation of Amaziah relates to his early years in which he was content to walk in the ways of his father Joash though not with the singleness and integrity of David. This early period of his reign was characterised by mediocrity and it was clear that his true character had yet to be revealed. When the real Amaziah emerged he manifested himself with such rashness, arrogance and infidelity that Yahweh sought to destroy him.

A review of Amaziah's life reveals two leading characteristics that shaped his destiny - infidelity and arrogance. Mediocrity in the Truth is not a sound basis for ultimate success. The man who is not fully committed to Yahweh will eventually be tested to see if the foundation of his life is firm. That test came to Amaziah in his war with Edom. In what is an incredible display of infidelity to Yahweh, Amaziah defeated Edom with divine help and then took their gods as his own. Surely it must have occurred to him that the gods of Edom had been powerless to save their devotees from his hand. Amaziah however, rejected Yahweh who had given him the victory over Edom and chose to serve the impotent idols of the conquered.

Arrogance is a product of pride and Amaziah is revealed as a very proud man. Although he was prepared to accept the advice of the first prophet sent to him to warn him of the dangers of hiring mercenaries from Israel; the second encounter after his victory over Edom is a classic demonstration of pride and arrogance. Before the prophet of God could conclude his words he was rudely and abruptly interrupted by Amaziah, who using his power and authority taunted and threatened the prophet in order to silence him. From that

time on Yahweh sought to destroy him and significantly used Amaziah's own arrogance and pride to that end.

Confident after his victory over Edom, Amaziah challenged Jehoash of Israel to war and in circumstances divinely guided was defeated and utterly humiliated. Disgraced in the eyes of his own people and reduced to powerlessness by Jehoash, Amaziah lived on for 15 years until a conspiracy among the people gathered sufficient momentum and he met an ignominious death at Lachish. This was a fitting end for a king who had by rashness and arrogance alienated himself from both his God and his people.

Amaziah is distinguished among the kings through his remarkable ability to offend people. Thoughtlessness resulted in offence to the mercenaries of Israel; ruthlessness to the captives of Edom outraged the remnant of that nation; inexplicable perfidy and idolatry enraged Yahweh; arrogance and boastfulness evoked the wrath of Jehoash; and finally the ways and acts of Amaziah offended and alienated his own people.

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

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron</u>
Accession aged 25	12:21	24:27
Divine estimation of his reign	14:1-4	25:1-2
Takes vengeance on his father's murderers	14:5-6	25:3-4
Prepares army - hires soldiers from Israel		25:5-10
Violently defeats Edom	14:7	25:11-12
Soldiers of Israel take revenge		25:13
Foolishly serves Edom's gods		25:14-16
Challenges Jehoash - is rebuffed	14:8-10	25:17-19
Is defeated and humiliated by Jehoash	14:11-14	25:20-24
Is assassinated in Lachish and buried in Jerusalem	14:17-20	25:25-28

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Kings 14:1-4

V.1 - "second year of Joash" - This was Jehoash the 3rd ruler of Jehu's dynasty in Israel.

V.2 - "his mother" - Selected by Jehoiada for Joash, 11 Chron.24:3.

V.3 - "not like David" - Inasmuch as his heart was not "safe" (see 1 Kings 15:3), his fidelity was uncertain and under test it gave way to apostasy. Like Joash he lacked David's singleness of mind and integrity.

"as Joash his father did" - In his early days Amaziah was basically an unoriginal and ordinary character - he saw no reason to alter his father's attitudes and ways. Only <sup>in</sup> later years was his true character revealed.

V.4 - "high places" - These remained the great problem of Judah's religious worship. Their use even for the worship of Yahweh had the effect of de-centralising the nations worship and service to Yahweh.

#### 11 Chron. 25:1-2

V.2 - "perfect heart" - SHALEM - complete, from the root shalam - to be safe. Unlike David his integrity was doubtful and finally he failed.

THE KINGDOM CONFIRMED - VENGEANCE TAKEN 11 Chron. 25:3-4

V.3 - "established" - CHAZAQ - fasten upon; seize. Roth. "confirmed". Seems to imply that some turmoil followed Joash's murder and that Amaziah's succession to the throne was temporarily in doubt.

"slew his servants" - This was justice as well as wisdom, see 11 Chron.24:25-26.

V.4 - "slew not their children" - Amaziah was a man of principle though not a completely dedicated man of God - he observed the law of Deut.24:16.

THE ALLIANCE WITH ISRAEL'S ARMY 11 Chron. 25:5-10

V.5 - Amaziah reveals a capacity for organization in the gathering and strengthening of his army.

V.6 - "hired" - CAKAR - temporary purchase, to hire. These were mercenaries - relations with Israel must therefore have been good to allow such cooperation between forces.

V.7 - "a man of God" - Un-named - a token of divine mercy and help for Amaziah. "not with Israel" - This implies Yahweh was with Judah. Roth. "...with any of the sons of Ephraim". Mercenaries are a dangerous element at any time, but on top of this they were from Israel whom Yahweh had forsaken because of their total apostasy.

V.8 - "But if thou wilt go" - RSV. "But if you suppose that in this way you will be strong for war".

"God shall make thee fall" - KASHAL - to totter or waver, (through weakness of the legs); by implication to falter, stumble.

"God hath power" - Roth. "for there is strength in God".

"to help" - AZAR - to surround, ie. to protect or aid.

"cast down" - Contrast the understanding of Asa and Jehoshaphat, 11 Chron.14:11; 20:6.

V.9 - "hundred talents" - A talent was worth approximately \$30,000 in today's currency, hence Amaziah had paid \$3,000,000 for the use of this army. No amount of money could be worth divine help which he had failed to seek - even in material terms Yahweh could repay his losses if he obeyed.

"army" - GEDUWD - a crowd (specifically of soldiers). A different word used in v7.

V.10 - "separated" - BADAL - to divide (separate or distinguish).

"go home again" - Roth. "to depart unto their own place".

"in great anger" - RSV. "fierce anger"; Roth. "a heat of anger".

THE WAR AGAINST EDOM 11 Chron. 25:11-12

V.11 - "strengthened himself" - Roth. "took courage".

"valley of salt" - A ravine on the south western shore of the Dead Sea. 11 Sam. 8:13; 1 Chron.18:12. This was the place where Edom had met many previous disasters.

"Seir" - "rough" or shaggy.

V.12 - "And other ten thousand" - Roth. "took captive ten thousand alive".  
"top of the rock" - SELAH - to be lofty, a craggy rock. Connect Obad.3;  
 Edom's pride was thus broken, though in a cruel way.  
"broken in pieces" - Roth. "torn asunder"; RSV. "dashed to pieces".

### 11 Kings 14:7

V.7 - "Selah" - The fortress of Edom, ie. Petra. Hence it seems that the 10,000 thrown from the rock were cast down into their own city.  
"Joktheel" - "Veneration of God". This is irony as Amaziah brought back Edom's gods to worship.

### THE REJECTED ISRAELITES TAKE REVENGE 11 Chron. 25:13

V.13 - "the soldiers" - BEN - a son (builder of family name). Roth. "the sons of the company", ie. representatives from them who took vengeance for wounded pride and lost opportunities for material gain.  
"fell" - Roth. "they spread themselves out against ...".  
"Beth-horon" - "House of hollowness" - a symbol of the way Amaziah's success was turned into an empty victory.  
"took much spoil" - Because they had been denied it by their rejection.

### AMAZIAH SERVES EDMON'S GODS 11 Chron. 25:14-16

V.14 - "set them up to be his gods" - This is incredible perfidy. It must have occurred to him that these same gods had been powerless to help Edom and that his victory was actually Yahweh's triumph over them.  
"bowed down himself" - SHACHAH - to prostrate.  
"burned incense" - ie. offered prayer before them (Ps. 141:2).

V.15 - "anger of Yahweh" - Amaziah had a remarkable facility for offending people through his rashness - firstly he had angered the army of Israel, then Edom, now Yahweh was offended and angered by his actions.  
"a prophet" - His purpose was to deliver an edict; not to advise and warn as in verse 7. Note the change in description from a "man of God" to a prophet. It is more than likely that it was the same man on both occasions.

V.16 - "as he talked with him" - R.S.V. - "as he was speaking, the king..."  
"Art thou made of the kings counsel" - R.S.V. - "Have we made you a royal counsellor." Amaziah rudely interrupted the prophet before he had completed his message with a supercilious, sarcastic and superior taunt that reveals his pride and unwillingness to yield to rebuke.  
"forbear" - R.S.V. - "Stop!" A command to desist.  
"why shouldest thou be smitten" - R.S.V. - "why should you be put to death". An open and shameless threat.  
"the prophet forbear" - R.S.V. - "so the prophet stopped."  
"determined" - YAATS - to advise; resolve. Amaziah stubbornly resisted chastisement so there could only be one result - Yahweh would set His face against him.

### AMAZIAH REBUFFED BY JEHOASH 11 Chron. 25:17-24

V.17 - "took advice" - YA'ATS - to advise, resolve. Not from Yahweh. However doubtless it was from counsellors who deemed it politically opportune to bring Israel to heel.



"Joash" - or Jehoash - "Yahweh-fired".

Jehoahaz - "Yahweh-seized".

"Jehu" - "Yah is he".

"come" - A blunt invitation to war. He was confident after his victory over Edom. Probably Amaziah was seeking revenge for attack of v.13.

V.18 - "The thistle" - CHOWACH - to pierce, a thorn. This was an apt simile for Amaziah's character. Judges 9:7-15.

"cedar" - Jehoash in the parable - a symbol of perpetuity and regal power.

"Give thy daughter to my son" - A form of submission being implied in the sealing of an alliance by marriage. Amaziah was asserting his authority.

"passed by a wild beast" - A Symbol of judgements upon Amaziah's arrogance.

V.19 - "Thou sayest" - Amaziah had grown boastful and arrogant. RSV. "And your heart has lifted you up in boastfulness".

"meddle to thine hurt" - Roth. "Wherefore shouldest thou engage in strife with misfortune".

V.20 - "it came of God" - This was Divine providence at work - Amaziah's pride was used by Yahweh to bring him into circumstances in which his characteristic rashness and arrogance would impel him towards disaster.

"they sought" - The people were culpable as well. They had also turned to the gods of Edom along with the king.

V.21 -

"saw one another in the face" - RSV. "faced one another in battle". The language of armed confrontation.

"Beth-shemesh" - "House of the sun".

V.22 - "put to the worse" - Roth. & RSV. "was defeated".

V.23 - "brake down the wall" - Symbolic of the humiliation of Amaziah and his power.

"the gate of Ephraim" - near north western corner of the wall of Jerusalem - aptly named for this incident.

"corner gate" - A section of the wall facing Israel in the north.

V.24 - "with Obed - Edom" - Obed-Edom's family had charge of the temple treasury, 1 Chron.26:15. Ironically Obed-Edom means, "servant of Edom", which Amaziah had become by serving their gods.

"hostages" - TA'ARUBAH - suretyship, ie. a pledge. Roth. & margin, lit. "sons of security".

### AMAZIAH'S DEATH AND BURIAL 11 Chron. 25:25-28

V.27 - "Now after the time" - RSV. "From the time". A conspiracy began immediately and lasted 15 years.

"from following" - Heb. "from after".

"made a conspiracy" - QESHER - an alliance.

"Lachish" - "obstinate", ie. hard to be captured - a city in the plain country 25 miles s.w. of Jerusalem and the second strongest fortress city in Judah.

"they sent to Lachish" - This reveals that the conspirators were men of influence - their emissaries were admitted into the city and were able to kill Amaziah apparently without opposition - the conspiracy had also evidently spread to Lachish and the death of the king had become a popular desire.

# JEHOAHAZ -

## The Oppressed Idolator

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Yahweh seized".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 10:35

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 25:25

LENGTH OF REIGN - 17 years

From B.C. 813-797

FATHER - Jehu ("Yah is he")

CONTEMPORARY KING - Joash B.C. 835-796.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Little is recorded of the son of Jehu, Yahweh's avenger, that enables a full character assessment to be made. Jehoahaz was content to walk in the idolatry of Jeroboam as was his father who had been anointed by Elisha to destroy the vile Baal worship of Ahab and Jezebel. He was therefore of the same stamp as all the other kings of Israel who for the sake of political expediency promoted the idolatrous calf worship of Bethel and Dan.

The subservience of Israel to the surrounding nations which had commenced during the last years of Jehu grew more intense in the reign of Jehoahaz as Yahweh delivered them into the hands of Hazael and Benhadad of Syria in retribution for their stubborn idolatry and apostasy. In the extremity of his oppression by Syria, Jehoahaz was moved to seek Yahweh and was heard by him because Yahweh had compassion on Israel which was rapidly declining towards total dissolution. It is recorded that Yahweh sent a saviour to Israel, 11 Kings 13:5. There seems little doubt that the deliverer was the aged prophet Elisha.

It is significant that Elisha's prophecy of Israel's deliverance through Jehoahaz's successor Jehoash, was given on his deathbed. Like the son of God he delivered the ecclesia in his death. Furthermore the remarkable revival of the dead man thrown into the grave of Elisha (11 Kings 13:21) foreshadowed the resurrection to justification of the saints.

### SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ

Accession and divine estimation	<u>11 Kings</u> 13:1-2
Delivered into the hands of kings of Syria	13:3
Seeks divine help in oppression	13:4-7
Death and burial in Samaria	13:8-9

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

ACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Kings 13:1-2  
V.2 - "followed" - YALAK ACHAR - to walk behind.

JEHOAHAZ OPPRESSED - RECEIVES DIVINE HELP 11 Kings 13:3-7

V.3 - "anger" - APH - The nose or nostril; hence the face (redness through rapid breathing).

"Hazael" - "God has seen".

"Benhadad" - "Son of Hadad" - A title of a number of Syrian kings.

"all their days" - Roth. - "continually".

V.4 - "besought" - CHALAH - to stroke; in flattering, to entreat. Roth. -

"appeased the face of Yahweh".

"seen the oppression of Israel" - This is the reason for divine help - Cp.

Ex. 3:7, Judges 10:15-16, Jer. 33:3.

V.5 - "a saviour" - YASHA - to open, be free; by imp. to be safe; to free or succour. The identity of the saviour is disputed. Some suggest Elisha, others Jehoash and others, king Adadnirari III (810-783) of Assyria who put Syria to tribute in 806 B.C. - However connect verses 22-25 which speak of the deliverance prophesied by Elisha. There is little doubt that the dying prophet was Israel's saviour.

V.6 - "but walked therein" - Roth. - "therein they walked".

"remained" - AMAD - to stand.

"grove" - ASHERAH - happy. The Phoenician goddess of fertility.

V.7 - "neither did he leave" - Roth. - "for he had not left remaining".

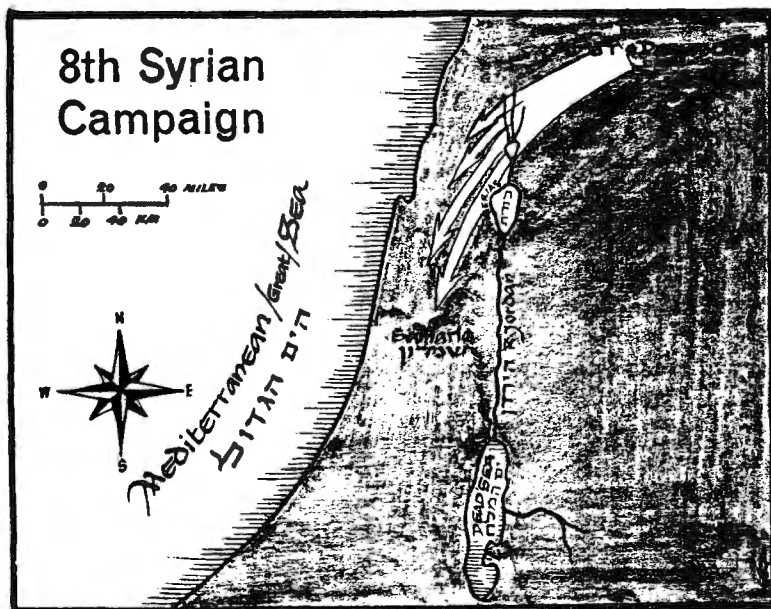
Constant war had severely depleted Israel's army.

"destroyed" - ABAD - to wander away, ie. lose ones self; by imp. to perish, and thence meaning; to destroy.

"dust by threshing" - R.S.V. - "made them like the dust at threshing". A symbol of complete treading down.

THE DEATH OF JEHOAHAZ 11 Kings 13:8-9

V.8 - "are they not written" - They are not in Chronicles as Yahweh was not interested in preserving any more than this account of Jehoahaz's life.



"And the anger of Yahweh was kindled against Israel and He delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria and into the hand of Ben-hadad"

# JEHOASH - The Indifferent Deliverer

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Yahweh-fired".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 13:10

LAST MENTION - Amos 1:1

LENGTH OF REIGN - 16 years

From B.C. 796-781

FATHER - Jehoahaz

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Joash B.C. 835-796, Amaziah B.C. 795-767.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The inspired record of Kings is concerned only with one incident during the reign of Jehoash and that is the last prophecy of Elisha the prophet. The picture of Jehoash that emerges from a study of this incident is of a man who was conscious of Elisha's standing before Yahweh but who could not bring himself to manifest Elisha's conviction in him. In the sorrowful circumstances of the impending death of the old prophet, Jehoash was moved to tearfully address him with the words used by Elisha himself at the departure of Elijah; "O, my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof". Jehoash stood in awe of the great prophet and recognised his importance to the nation, but he just did not possess sufficient faith to make the most from the last prophecy of the "saviour" (11 Kings 13:5) that Yahweh had sent to Israel.

Commanded to strike the ground with the "arrows of deliverance from Syria" he indifferently smote 3 times and stopped. Elisha was wroth for he knew that the promised deliverance would now be cut short because of the failure of Jehoash to fully enter into this enacted symbolism. It revealed him for what he really was: a man lacking conviction in Yahweh and hence indifferent to a deliverance promised through an aged, sick and dying prophet.

## HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF JEHOASH

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession and divine estimation	13:10-11	
Visits the ailing prophet Elisha	13:14	
Elisha's last prophecy	13:15-19	
The death and burial of Elisha	13:20-21	
He defeats Syria thrice	13:22-25	
A challenge from Amaziah	14:8	25:17
Rebuffs Amaziah with a parable	14:9-10	25:18-19
Joins battle with and defeats Amaziah	14:11-14	25:20-24
Death and burial	14:15-16	

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

ACCESSION, DIVINE ESTIMATION AND DEATH 11 Kings 13:10-13

V.11 - Almost identical to the assessment of his father, v2.

V.13 - This is interesting, as the record of his death is followed by an account of his dealings with Elisha - hence Jehoash is only secondary and incidental to what follows. The real interest centres upon Elisha as a type of the Messiah of Israel who delivered God's ecclesia in his death.

### ELISHA'S LAST PROPHECY 11 Kings 13:14-19

V.14 - "wept over his face" - reveals that Jehu's sons were not ignorant. They knew Elisha's position and status before God and that what he stood for was right. They had special cause to lament Elisha's death - he had anointed Jehu and established his dynasty.

"O, my father,..the chariot of Israel" - Recalls Elisha's acclamation at Elijah's removal, 11 Kings 2:12. As the horses and chariots which appeared at Elijah's removal remained with Elisha he had assumed Elijah's status in the nation. 11 Kings 6:17.

V.16 - "Put thine hand" - RSV. "draw the bow".

V.17 - "arrow of Yahweh's deliverance" - TESHUAH - to rescue. A symbolic act - it was an ancient custom to shoot an arrow or cast a spear into enemy territory before a military campaign, Josh.8:18.

"Aphek" - "fortress". An old battleground of the nations.

"consumed" - KALAH - to end (cease, be finished, perish).

V.19 - "wroth" - QATSAPH - to crack off, ie. burst out in rage.

"five or six times" - Jehoash's compliance with Elisha's wish was with indifference and was not a sign that he shared the dying prophet's conviction, hence he only half-heartedly entered into the enacted symbolism to his and Israel's ultimate cost.

### THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF ELISHA 11 Kings 13:20-21

V.20 - "bands of the Moabites" - Elisha could have been buried in Abel-Meholah but it was more likely Gilgal or a place near the schools of the prophets in the area.

V.21 - "was let down" - Roth. & RSV. "as soon as the man touched the bones".

"he revived" - CHAYAH - to live, to revive.

"stood up on his feet" - Roth. "rose up on his feet". Connect Matt.27:52-53; John 11:44. This last miracle associated with Elisha performed by Yahweh when he was dead testified that he had a double portion of Elijah's spirit upon him. Elisha performed 16 miracles whilst Elijah performed 8. (See note in Companion Bible, page 491).

### JEHOASH DEFEATS SYRIA THRICE 11 Kings 13:22-25

V.22 - This was the situation all Jehoahaz's reign - now in the reign of Jehoash v5 was fulfilled - the "saviour" was Elisha.

V.23 - "gracious" - CHANAN - to bend or stoop in kindness, to favour.

"compassion" - RACHAM - to fondle, by implication, to love, espec. compassion.

"respect" - PANAHAH - to turn, by implication, to face, ie. appear, look.

"because of his covenant" - Cp. Rom.11:28.

"presence" - PANEH - the face, the part that turns.

V.25 - "beat" - NAKAH - to strike.



# JEROBOAM -

## The Militant Restorer

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "The people will contend".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 13:13

LAST MENTION - Amos 7:11

LENGTH OF REIGN - 41 years

From B.C. 781-754

FATHER - Jehoash

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Amaziah B.C. 795-767, Uzziah B.C. 766-740.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Yahweh's historian has only recorded the military exploits of Jeroboam 11 as he set about recovering the territory lost to Syria during the reigns of Jehu and Jehoahaz. The only other thing noteworthy concerning him is that he, like all his predecessors continued the idolatry of "Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin".

It is evident that Jeroboam was a capable and determined warrior and military tactician. His strength as a military leader was used by Yahweh to restore Israel to a measure of viability as a kingdom in what must have been a final attempt to recover His backsliding people from a deeply ingrained apostasy.

Jeroboam 11 was not the man however, who could lead Israel in a spiritual reformation. The object in undertaking his military campaigns was purely political and self-centred. He owed his military success and the unusual length of his reign to the faithfulness of Yahweh who had promised Jehu that his children would sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation, 11 Kings 10:30.

### SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF JEROBOAM 11

	<u>11 Kings</u>
Accession following death of Jehoash	13:13
Divine estimation of his reign	14:23-24
Successful military campaigns	14:25-27
Final summary and death	14:28-29

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND SUCCESSFUL MILITARY CAMPAIGNS 11 Kings 14:23-27

V.24 - "Jeroboam" - He followed his namesake's religious policies to the letter - possibly he was deliberately named after Jeroboam 1.

V.25 - "coast" - Roth. - "boundary".

"entering of Hamath" - "Entering" is BOW - to go or come. "Hamath" means walled; from a root, to join; a wall of protection. It was a strategic pass into Israel from the north.

"sea of the plain" - "Plain" is ARABAH - a desert; especially of the Jordan valley beyond the dead sea. Refers here to the Dead Sea, Deut.3:17.

"his servant Jonah" - "Jonah" means "the dove". This prophecy does not appear in the book of Jonah and was obviously given under different circumstances to that recorded in Jonah.

"son of Amittai" - Meaning "veracious", from EMETH - truth, stability.

"Gath-hepher" - "Winepress of the well". A town of Zebulun. 3 miles from Nazareth in lower Galilee. Josh. 19:13. This is significant in view of John 7:52 and Matt. 16:4.

V.26 - "affliction" - ONIY - depression, ie. misery. Roth. - "humiliation".

"very bitter" - MARAH - to be bitter or unpleasant. Mostly translated as "rebellious" - this was Israel's condition.

"any shut up or left" - R.S.V. - "there was none left bond or free".

V.27 - "Yahweh said" - R.S.V. - "but Yahweh had not said that he would.."

Roth. - "neither had Yahweh spoken, to wipe out the name..."

"blot out" - MACHAH - to stroke or rub; to erase, Deut. 9:14.

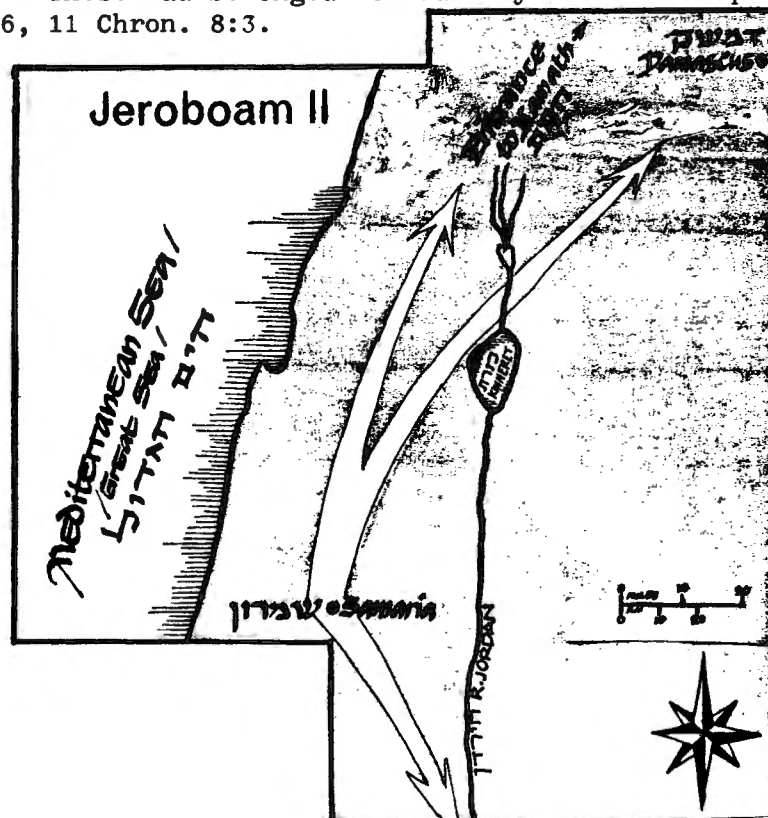
### FINAL SUMMARY AND DEATH 11 Kings 14:28-29

V.28 - "how he warred" - He had a reputation as a mighty warrior and General who through divine blessing on Israel recovered much of David's original kingdom.

"which belonged to Judah" - These had belonged to Judah by David's conquest, 11 Sam. 8:6, 1 Chron. 18:6, 11 Chron. 8:3.

#### JEROBOAM'S 3 CAMPAIGNS

1. North to Hamath
2. N.E. to Damascus
3. S.E. to Jordan Valley



# UZZIAH -

## The Presumptuous Pragmatist

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Strength of Yah". Also known as Azariah - "Yah has helped", from a root, to surround, protect.

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 14:21

LAST MENTION - Zech. 14:5

LENGTH OF REIGN - 52 years

From B.C. (791)-766-740

AGE AT ACCESSION - (As co-regent) 16

AT DEATH - 68

FATHER - Amaziah - "Strength of Yah".

MOTHER - Jecoliah - "Yah will enable".

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Jeroboam 11 B.C. 781-754, Zechariah B.C. 754-753, Shallum B.C. 753, Menahem B.C. 753-742, Pekaiiah B.C. 742-741, Pekah B.C. 740-732/731.

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - Hos. 1:1, Amos 1:1, Zech. 14:5, Isa. 1:1, 6:1, 7:1.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Uzziah is one of the most interesting but also one of the most tragic figures of the period of the kings. Like his father Amaziah, and his grandfather Joash he began well and the greater part of his reign witnessed great achievements and success, but the last years of his life were spent in abject misery as a result of one serious act of presumption against Yahweh.

Uzziah was a self-motivated man. He was industrious and totally dedicated in his efforts to establish the kingdom of Judah. He always had a project in hand and throughout the early part of his reign was never idle in his attempts to build up the ecclesia of God. His achievements with divine help ranged from dramatic victories over the Philistines and Arabians in the south to the establishment of an agricultural society in Judah with formidable defences of international renown.

The greatness of Uzziah's achievements and fame is repeatedly emphasised in 11 Chron. 26:1-15, and the reason for it is provided in verse 5 and again in verse 15; "as long as he sought Yahweh, God made him to prosper", and; "and his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong". Uzziah sought Yahweh and as a consequence his initiative and determination were rewarded with divine blessings that produced remarkable and unique results. There is a lesson in this for the servants of God in all ages. However, there is another important reason why the record is at pains to highlight the magnitude of Uzziah's accomplishments.

Unmitigated success sometimes develops self-confidence and self-

Uzziah of Judah

esteem; this was the effect it had upon Uzziah as is amply expressed in 11 Chron.26:16; "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction". "Pride cometh before a fall" and the fall of Uzziah was great indeed. For something close to 40 years he had enjoyed enormous success in every project to which he had put his hand and was uniquely blessed by Yahweh so that his name was widely known, and respected. At the height of his success the prophet Isaiah commenced his ministry with the message of Isa.2; "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks". Isaiah's message was that "Judah and Jerusalem" should attain greatness and international respect through the success of Israel's Messiah. Uzziah had conquered the surrounding nations, was internationally famous and had built Judah into an agricultural society of considerable greatness in those days.

The question that began to occupy the mind of Uzziah was, "when Messiah cometh, shall he do greater works than this man?" He after all, was the son of David who occupied the throne of Yahweh in Jerusalem. He had been uniquely blessed by Yahweh; the kingdom of Judah was at rest enjoying the bounty of his agricultural programmes. Furthermore, his military campaigns had subdued the surrounding nations who now stood in awe of Judah's strength. Might it not be conceivable that he Uzziah, had fulfilled at least in measure the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the work of Israel's Messiah.

Only such a sense of self-importance could explain the boldness of Uzziah in entering the temple to offer incense upon the incense altar before the veil. It is clear from the record of this act of presumption that he considered himself to be equal to the priests who challenged him because he disputed with them before the incense altar. So inflated had his opinion of himself become that he considered himself to be above the divine stipulations concerning entry into the sanctuary. He was so completely confident of his personal standing before Yahweh that he saw no need for a mediator. It is clear that Uzziah had begun to think that he was the "Messiah".

Judgement upon his presumption was rapid. Before Uzziah could express his wrath to the company of priests who had pursued him into the temple, the dreaded scourge of leprosy appeared in his forehead - a sign from Yahweh of the source of his problem. There was corruption in his thinking. So Uzziah lived out his days with leprosy in his forehead; the symbol of corrupt thinking and a defiled conscience, and was completely cut off from all contact with the temple by virtue of his uncleanness. It is highly significant that as the would-be "Messiah" died in his corruption, Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 12:41 -reference to Isa.6) and said of him; "I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple".

In summary, the epithet "The Presumptuous Pragmatist" was chosen to encapsulate the character of Uzziah because he was a man who believed that practical success justified claims clearly contradictory to divine laws. It took some 40 years for his attitudes to be so clouded by self-esteem and for the grounds of humility to be removed, but in the end his character was revealed and his last recorded "act" has probably sealed his eternal destiny.

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

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession aged 16	14:21	26:1
Restores Elath to Judah	14:22	26:2
Divine estimation of his reign	15:1-4	26:3-4
Seeks God in days of Zechariah		26:5
Conquers surrounding nations		26:6-8

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Fortifies Jerusalem		26:9
Fortifies Judah and promotes agriculture		26:10
Greatly strengthens his forces		26:11-15
Presumptuously enters the temple		26:16-18
Is smitten with leprosy in forehead		26:19-20
Jotham acts as co-regent	15:5	26:21
Death and burial	15:7	26:22-23

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND GOOD EARLY REIGN 11 Chron. 26:1-15

V.1 - "all the people" - The people responsible for Amaziah's death and Uzziah's installation did so from a desire to be rid of an unpopular apostate, 11 Chron.25:27.

V.2 - "built Elath" - "Trees" or "a grove", ie. palms. Otherwise known as Elath on the Gulf of Aqaba. This reveals that he was a man of action and initiative.

V.3 - "fifty two years" - Second only in length to Manasseh (55) - his life however is given very little space in the record of Kings.

V.4 - "Amaziah did" - ie. during the early years of Amaziah's reign.

V.5 - "sought" - DARASH - to tread, frequent; follow. Roth. & R.S.V. - "He set himself to seek God". Herein lay the reason for his enormous success.

"Zechariah" - "Yah hath remembered". Unknown other than in this place - quite evidently a man of faith and great influence.

"understanding" - BIYN - to separate mentally (or distinguish) ie. understand.

"in the visions of God" - RA'AH - to see. Roth. - "in the seeing of God". Dan. 1:17.

"and as long as" - Roth. - "and throughout the days of his seeking Yahweh".

"God made him to prosper" - "Prosper" is TSALEACH - to push forward. Elohim worked with him - see verse 7.

V.6 - "Gath" - "Treading out grapes"; "a winepress". The home of Goliath - contrast 11 Chron. 25:23.

"Jabneh" - "A building".

"Ashdod" - "Ravager".

"about Ashdod" - The sense is as the Margin of A.V. - "in the region of Ashdod".

"Philistines" - "To roll (in the dust)".

V.7 - "Arabians" - Last seen 11 Chron. 21:16 in association with the Philistines. In order to open the way to Elath the south would have to <sup>be</sup>cleared of Philistines and Arabs.

"Gur-Baal" - "Dwelling of Baal".

"Mehunims" - "A residence" - An inhabitant of Maon. A place in Mt. Seir near Petra.

V.8 - "Ammonites" - last mentioned warring with Jehoshaphat, 11 Chron.20:1.

"gifts" - MINCHAH - bestow tribute.



"spread" - YALAK - to walk, ie. to carry.

"strengthened" - CHAZAQ - to seize, to be strong.

"exceedingly" - MAAL - upward, above, overhead, from the top. 11 Chron.17:12.  
Roth. "For he shewed exceeding great strength".

V.9 - "built towers" - MIGDAL - towers (by analogy - a rostrum), thus reversing 11 Chron.25:23.

"corner gate" - see 11 Chron.25:23 - in the north west corner.

"valley gate" - GAY - a gorge (from its lofty sides). Also on north western side of the wall.

"turning of the wall" - MAQTSOAH - bending, an angle or recess. Neh.3:19-20.

"fortified" - CHAZAQ - to be strong.

V.10 - "desert" - MIDBAR - a pasture, ie. open field. Roth.(margin) "wilder-ness", also RSV.

"digged many wells" - "digged" is CHATSEB - to cut, hew, split.

"low country" - SHEPHELAH - lowland; the low hills and plain on the western seaboard were captured, v6,7.

"husbandmen" - IKKAR - to dig, a farmer.

"Carmel" - "fruitful field" - thus Roth. translates; RSV. "fruitful lands". (not Mt. Carmel in Israel).

"he loved husbandry" - ADAMAH - soil (from its redness). Roth. "a lover of the soil was he".

V.11 - "host of fighting men" - Roth. "had a force ready for war, to go forth as a host in company".

"Jeiel" - "carried away of God".

"Maaseiah" - "work of Yah".

"ruler" - SHOTER - to write, a scribe, by implication an official, superintendent.

"Hananiah" - "Yah has favoured".

V.12 - "chief of the fathers" - Roth. "ancestral chiefs".

V.13 - "an army" - Roth. "force of a host".

"with mighty power" - "mighty" is CHAYIL - a force: "power" is KOWACH - vigor.

V.14 - "habergeons" - SHIRYONAH - a corslet (as if twisted), a breastplate or coat of mail.

V.15 - "engines" - CHISHSHABOWN - a contrivance (warlike machine). Roth. "inventions".

"bulwarks" - PINNAH - an angle, by implication a pinnacle.

"spread" - YATSA - to go out. Roth. "went forth afar".

"marvellously" - PALA - to separate, distinguish.

"till he was strong" - failure followed on the principle of 1 Cor.10:12 - in this he shared his fathers fate, 11 Chron.25:19, also Jehoshaphat's and later Hezekiah. His name however was fulfilled - "Yah hath strengthened".

### PRESUMPTION - SMITTEN WITH LEPROSY 11 Chron. 26:16-21

V.16 - "when he was strong" - Uzziah's pride and self confidence grew to a point where he lost sight of the source and origin of his prosperity. This was a danger predicted, Deut.8:12-14, 17-18. Solomon had been aware of it,

## UZZIAH - THE WOULD-BE MESSIAH

The extraordinary presumption of Uzziah in seeking the high-priesthood in addition to the throne of Judah can be explained by a desire to attain all the qualifications of the Messiah of Israel. Forty years of astonishing achievement and success in building a powerful and flourishing agricultural society of which the surrounding nations stood in awe, led king Uzziah to believe that he had achieved the military success and the prosperity that would distinguish Messiah's reign. After all, he was "the son of David" and Yahweh had established his kingdom and mightily blessed every work to which he turned his hand. Only one thing was lacking: he was not the High-priest and mediator of his people and it was this dual role of king-priest which he eagerly sought to crown his success and fulfill his mistaken ambitions.

An examination of the frustration of Uzziah's presumptuous grasp for the high-priesthood and his subsequent punishment reveal him as the antithesis of the true Messiah whose position he desired to usurp. The following is an analysis of 11 Chron. 26:16-21 and its relationship to the true Messiah, and should be considered together with the contexts of Lev. 13:42-46 and Isa. 6 :-

### UZZIAH (11 Chron.26)

V.16 - Josephus records that it was on a special feast day that he entered the Temple to offer incense for the nation. He sought to mediate for the people of Judah.

V.18 - He was forcefully reminded that the priest-hood belonged "to the sons of Aaron".

V.19 - Leprosy in the forehead - the symbol of corrupt thinking - this signified that his mediator-ship was utterly rejected.

V.20 - Josephus records that "the earthquake in the days of Uzziah" occurred at this crisis - the walls of the Temple were split allowing a ray of light to enter.

Smitten with leprosy Uzziah rushed from the Temple and in accordance with the Law of Lev.13:42-46 had most likely rent his garment and uncovered his head, crying out;

### CHRIST

Heb.9:24 - "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us!"

Heb.7:14-17 - Christ was from Judah "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priest-hood". Note V.16

Isa.53:4&11 - Christ was "stricken (NAGA - same word "smitten" 11 Chron. 26:20), smitten of God and afflicted" but overcame Adamic condemnation (leprosy). "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many".

Matt.27:51 & Heb.10:19-21 - Christ's death was accompanied by an earthquake which split the veil of the Temple. His sacrifice opened the way into the "holiest" and his resurrection confirmed him as "high priest over the house of God".

Isa.6:1-8 - (Note John 12:39-41) Christ appears in glory "sitting upon a throne (as King) and his train (Heb.- high priest's garments) filled the Temple". Surrounded by an immort-

<u>UZZIAH</u>	<u>CHRIST</u>
<p>"unclean, unclean" (twice = division) Note Lev.21:10.</p> <p>V.21 - He dwelt alone in a house apart for the remainder of his days; cut off from both the Temple and his people.</p> <p>Unable to reign, Jotham ruled the land - Uzziah was neither king nor high-priest.</p>	<p>alised priestly class (Seraphims - Rev.4:8) he is praised, "Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh Tz'vaoth". (Three - seed, regeneration, sonship, completeness).</p> <p>The means by which this magnificent result is to be accomplished is revealed in Isa.6:5-8, which speaks of cleansing from contact with leprosy.</p>

### UZZIAH AS A TYPE OF MODERN ISRAEL

The life of Uzziah was one of great achievement through divine blessing and was only marred in the last ten years of his reign by a foolish act of presumption by which he lost everything. The king who sought to become Israel's Messiah, in the end became a remarkable type of modern Israel. The following is a brief list of the achievements of Uzziah and the way they foreshadowed the success of the State of Israel in recent years. The humbling of Uzziah is also clearly used in scripture as a type of the humbling of the Jews by the events of Armageddon. The events of 11 Chron.26 in chronological order are:-

1. Uzziah captured and rebuilt Elath into a trading port (So Israel did in 1956 - Elath today is a trading port of the utmost importance)
2. He captured the Shephela and the Negev (Israel captured these areas in 1948-49 and have held them ever since)
3. He defeated both the Arabs and the peoples of modern Jordan (In successive wars modern Israel has also defeated both peoples)
4. He fortified Jerusalem against attack (All new buildings in Jerusalem today are specially constructed to withstand modern warfare)
5. He built a prosperous agricultural society (The "miracle" of modern Israel's agricultural prosperity is world famous)
6. Uzziah found water supplies in the wilderness (Israel's innovative "Water Carrier" has brought water to barren land; e.g. Negev)
7. Uzziah had an army of 300,000 trained in guerrilla warfare (Israel's army is approximately 300,000 and are perhaps the world's best guerrilla fighters)
8. Uzziah developed a unique missile capacity (Israel invariably updates missile systems purchased from the super-powers)
9. Uzziah was helped by God to achieve his military and economic success (That modern Israel has been helped by God is indisputable)
10. Uzziah attributed his success to his own strength and abilities (Israel today believes its success is by its own strength)
11. Uzziah was humbled by an earthquake (Israel will be humbled by events of Armageddon including an earthquake likened to that which occurred in the days of Uzziah - Zech.14:5)
12. Smitten and humbled, Uzziah dwelt in a house apart to contemplate his sin (So the remnant of Israel will dwell apart until they realise the extent of their iniquities and pride - Zech.12:12-14)

Prov.16:18. It is a sign of a loss in faith, Hab.2:4. The answer to acts of presumption is to actively cultivate humility.

"lifted up" - GABAHH - to soar, ie. be lofty (fig. to be haughty). Contrast 11 Chron.17:8, (see notes on "Jehoshaphat").

"destruction" - SHACHATH - to decay, ie. to ruin.

"transgressed" - MA'AL - to cover up; fig. to act covertly, ie. treacherously. Roth. "acted unfaithfully".

"to burn incense" - in symbol he sought to offer prayer but it was totally unacceptable - there was no mediator. Uzziah had by passed Yahweh's chosen mediators, Nadab and Abihu; Korah, Dathan and Abiram had attempted a similar presumption with disastrous results, Lev.10 and Num.16.

"the altar of incense" - He was the first non-priest to enter the holy place in defiance of Yahweh's decree.

V.17 - "Azariah" - his namesake - "Yah hath helped".

"valiant men" - Roth. "sons of valour". (mg. "able men").

V.18 - "withstood" - AMAD - to stand. Roth. "they took their stand".

"the priests" - see Exod.30:7-8.

"consecrated" - QADASH - to be (pronounce, make) clean. Yahweh determines the correct manner of approach to himself - not man.

"go out of the sanctuary" - Roth. "go forth out of...": "sanctuary" - MIQQIDASH - a consecrated thing or place.

"trespassed" - MAAL - same as transgressed" v16.

"thine honour" - on the principle of 1 Sam.2:30. RSV. "it will bring you no honour from Yahweh".

V.19 - "Then Uzziah was wrath" - He was disposed to stand his ground and argue, revealing a hardened proud heart, not malleable to receiving rebuke.

"had a censer in his hand" - Reminiscent of Num.16:17-18.

"leprosy" - TSARA'ATH - to scourge, ie. be stricken with leprosy. A symbol of living death and its cause, sin.

"forehead" - METSACH - conspicuous, the forehead. Symbol of the mind - Uzziah's problem was corruption of his thinking hence his judgement was symbolic.

"rose up" - Roth. "shot forth".

"from beside" - He stood corrupting beside the incense altar, a certain sign that his prayers were rejected.

V.20 - "looked upon him" - PANAHA - to turn the face, look. Roth. "turned towards him". The record implies that momentarily the priests turned away from Uzziah possibly to consider what action should be taken - however their attention was soon drawn to Uzziah again.

"and behold" - Roth & Youngs Lit. "Lo!" - indicating surprise.

"thrust him out" - BAHAL - to tremble inwardly (or palpitate) ie. be alarmed or agitated, by implication to hasten.

"yea, himself" - Roth - "Yea / even himself /".

"hasted" - DACHAPH - to urge, ie. hasten.

"smitten" - NAGA - to touch, ie. lay the hand upon.

V.21 - "a leper" - As such he had absolutely no access to the temple or the priests - there was no way of return, particularly for this form of leprosy, Lev.13:42-46.

"several" - CHOPSHIYTH - prostration by sickness, from the root, to spread loose, free. Roth. "a house apart". Connect Lev.13:46.

"cut off" - GAZAR - to cut down or off, figuratively to destroy, divide, exclude.

"Jotham" - Reigned as co-regent, probably about 10 years.

### THE DEATH OF UZZIAH 11 Chron. 26:22-23

V.22 - "Isaiah" - "Yah hath saved"; "salvation of Yah". He began to prophesy during the reign of Uzziah, Isa.1:1. Note context of Isa.1 - v.5,7,8,12-13. Note also that events of 11 Chron.26:16-23 are the background to Isa.6.

"Amoz" - "strong".

V.23 - "field of the burial" - Like Jehoram, 11 Chron.21:20, and later Ahaz 11 Chron.28:27, he was excluded from the sepulchres of the kings because of his leprosy.

### WHY MATTHEW EXCLUDED FOUR RULERS

The genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ is divided by Matthew into three divisions of fourteen generations (Matt.1:17) but he has been accused of altering facts to provide for this arrangement. Four rulers have been excluded between Joram and Ozias (Uzziah) in verse 8, namely; Ahaziah, Athaliah, Joash and Amaziah.

Was their omission an oversight or did Matthew deliberately exclude them for a reason?

The latter is clearly the answer to this question. Matthew was justified in omitting them from the lineage of David for they were not truly of his house but of the house of Ahab king of Israel. As a result of a foolish political alliance, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah brought into his house Athaliah the corrupt daughter of Ahab and Jezebel by contracting a marriage between her and his eldest son and heir to the throne, Jehoram. (11 Chron.18:1) The unhappy consequences of this alliance were soon manifested in the house of Ahab gaining complete control of the kingdom of Judah and in the introduction of the vilest idolatries into the southern kingdom. The influence of Athaliah remained until the reign of Amaziah and all four rulers omitted by Matthew were responsible for introducing and prompting corrupt idolatries into Judah.

Yahweh pronounced the judgement of annihilation on the wicked house of Ahab (1 Kings 21:21-22; 11 Kings 10:10), and Athaliah and her posterity were included in that condemnation despite the fact that she had married into the line of David. At Sinai Yahweh had declared that he would visit the iniquity of the rebellious unto the "third and fourth generation of them that hate me" (Exod.34:7 cp. Deut.5:9) and so on the basis of this principle the four rulers were excluded from the lineage of David because of their wickedness and hatred of Yahweh after the pattern of Ahab and Jezebel.

Matthew indicates in his genealogy that the true line of David was restored in Uzziah, testifying that Yahweh is not only just but also merciful. The omission of four rulers is therefore not an oversight nor an attempt by Matthew to alter facts to suit his genealogical arrangement, but quite to the contrary a direct intervention by the Spirit of God to enshrine his judgement against Ahab's house.

# JOTHAM - The Upright

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Yahweh is perfect" or "upright".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:5

LAST MENTION - Mic. 1:1

LENGTH OF REIGN - 16 years

From B.C. (750)-739-734

AGE AT ACCESSION - 25 years

AT DEATH - 41 years

FATHER - Uzziah - "Strength of Yah".

MOTHER - Jerushah - "Possessed" (by a husband)

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - During his coregency with Uzziah; Menahem B.C. 753-742, Pekaiah B.C. 742-741, Pekah B.C. 740-732/1;  
During his sole reign: Pekah.

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - Isa. 1:1, Hos. 1:1, Mic. 1:1.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The career of Jotham was relatively short but enormously successful. He came to the throne as a coregent with his father Uzziah who was forced out of public life through the leprosy contracted in the temple as a result of his presumption. It appears that Jotham's sole reign lasted only about 6 years but throughout his short reign he followed the example of his father's early years and sought Yahweh who in turn blessed him.

The history of Jotham's reign is very short but sufficient is recorded to clearly indicate that Jotham was one of Judah's finest rulers. Like his father he was successful at home and abroad; his military campaigns and internal projects to fortify Judah were all divinely blessed until he "became mighty". The only deficiency of his reign was that his dedication to Yahweh was not shared by the majority of the people of Judah. After the divine estimation of Jotham the record concludes ominously; "And the people did yet corruptly". Jotham's personal integrity was beyond question but he appears to have been unaware of the desperate need for a reformation in the ecclesia. This had to wait till the reign of Hezekiah his grandson.

The most important feature of Jotham's life was that his success was directly related to his godliness. The account is explicit; "So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared (established or fixed) his ways before Yahweh his God". The grounds upon which present and ultimate success are predicated have not changed; "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word". (Isa.66:2).

HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF JOTHAM'S REIGN

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Becomes co-regent with his father	15:5	26:21
Divine estimation of his reign	15:32-34	27:1-2
Builds fortifications in Judah	15:35	27:3-4
Defeats the Ammonites and prospers		27:5-6
Final summary and death	15:36-38	27:7-9

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESDIVINE ESTIMATION AND PROSPERITY 11 Chron. 27:1-4

V.1 - "sixteen years" - approximately 10 of which as co-regent with Uzziah.  
"Zadok" - "just" or "right".

V.2 - Jotham upheld the principles that governed Uzziah's early years and avoided his father's error.

"the people did yet corruptly" - SHACHATH - to decay, ruin. - 11 Kings 15:35 adds that the high places were still in use. Uzziah's great achievements had not engendered a spirit of dedication to Yahweh in his people.

V.3 - "high gate" - Roth. "upper gate".

"Ophel" - a mound, ie. a fortress. A fortified section of the eastern wall of Jerusalem. Mic.4:8.

V.4 - "castles" - MIGDALAH - a tower - in this he followed his father's policies of strong defences to protect the ecclesia from attack.

DEFEATS AMMON 11 Chron. 27:5-6

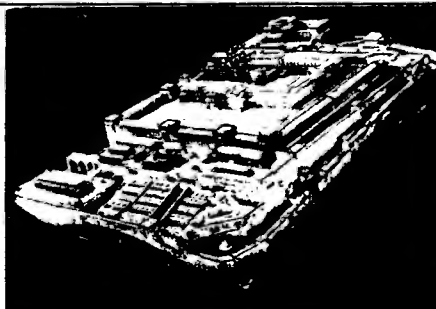
V.5 - "Ammonites" - They had given tribute to Uzziah, 11 Chron.26:8, but probably saw his demise as an opportunity to revolt.

V.6 - "mighty" - CHAZAQ - seize, to be strong.

"prepared his ways" - KUWN - to be erect, to set up, establish, fix. Roth.  
"he fixed his ways". This was the key to his success.

DEATH AND BURIAL 11 Chron. 27:7-9

V.7 - "all his wars" - He was a man of action in the Truth, always prepared to fight the Truth's battles.



Schick Reconstruction of Solomon's Temple

# AHAZ -

## The Perfidious Idolator

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Possessor" - from root meaning "to seize".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:38

LAST MENTION - Mic. 1:1

LENGTH OF REIGN - 16 years

From B.C. (734) -732-715

AGE AT ACCESSION - 20 years (Lxx. 25 years) AT DEATH - 36 (Lxx. 41)

FATHER - Jotham - "Yahweh is perfect".

MOTHER - Not named - the only one in the historical records of the kings of Judah.

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Pekah B.C. 740-732/1, Hoshea B.C. 731-723.

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - Isa. 7:1-12, 14:28, 38:8, Hos. 1:1, Mic. 1:1.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Ahaz must be rated amongst the worst of Judah's rulers. He was the complete antithesis of his father Jotham and was so perfidious throughout his reign that there are times when the divine chronicler appears almost incredulous at the extent of his apostasy. The exclamation "This is that king Ahaz", (11 Chron. 28:22) fully illustrates how far Ahaz went in frustrating and antagonising Yahweh. In all his ways he was utterly obnoxious to Yahweh. Not only was Ahaz distinguished by such exclamations concerning his personal faithlessness but perhaps more importantly he was memorialised as the great defiler of God's ecclesia; "For Yahweh brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he made Judah naked and transgressed sore against Yahweh." 11 Chron. 28:19.

This statement is most illuminating because of its reference to Ahaz as "king of Israel", which of course he was not. It is clear that the spirit guided Yahweh's chronicler to refer to Ahaz in this way to reveal that Ahaz had reduced Judah to the level of Israel in his sight. Ahaz was no better and in many ways was more corrupt than the wicked kings of Israel. Under his leadership Judah was indistinguishable from Israel which was in its last stages of decay and dissolution.

Furthermore, the phrase, "he made Judah naked" provides the key to Ahaz's character. Rotherham translates; "for he had given the rein in Judah". Where there is no faith the flesh completely dominates human life. Ahaz was totally devoid of faith and gave himself over to the most corrupt forms of idolatry in order to satisfy fleshly lusts. In doing this he opened the flood-gates of the corruption that simmered beneath the surface during his father's reign, 11 Chron. 27:2. He gave the people what they sought, open "religion" with no restraints.



Ahaz of Judah

The effect of this wholesale idolatry was to shut the doors upon eternal life for an entire generation and this was symbolised by his act of shutting the doors of the house of God and preventing the activities of the Levitical priesthood. Judah's legitimate worship ceased and was replaced by Ahaz's own abhorrent system adopted from Syria. Not only did he shut the temple doors but he also ransacked it for the holy vessels in order to bribe Tiglath-pileser of Assyria to assist him against Syria and Israel. Following his reverses in his conflict with the latter and his failure to secure Assyria's help he sent to Damascus to obtain the design of its altars so that he could establish an altar in Jerusalem in order to worship Syria's gods. He removed and repositioned the laver and the altar of burnt offering in the temple court and set up his Syrian altar in their place. His reasoning was that if the gods of Syria had helped them in defeating Judah, they would help him if he worshipped them. Such was the incredible perfidy of Ahaz.

Before these developments however, the faithlessness of Ahaz in its incipient form was revealed in his encounter with the prophet Isaiah at the Virgin's fountain described in Isaiah 7. Yahweh sought to convert Ahaz and to encourage him to manifest faith in him. It was God's intention to protect and defend Judah and no better grounds for faith could have been offered than the divine assurances of help against Pekah and Rezin. Ahaz was encouraged to seek a sign from Yahweh to confirm his intention to defend Judah, but Ahaz hypocritically declined the invitation. His rejoinder, "I will not ask, neither will I tempt Yahweh" is not a manifestation of humility, but rather of unbelief. Ahaz simply did not believe in Yahweh and to ask a sign would have been to acknowledge the claims of a God whose existence and power he doubted. The final words of Isaiah's prophecy concerning Pekah and Rezin had foreshadowed such a dénouement ; "If you trust not, surely you cannot be trusted". This is a divine principle - the trusting can be trusted; the faithful can be relied upon. The subsequent years were to reveal the truth of this principle.

HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF AHAZ'S REIGN

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession at age 20	15:38	27:9
His evil reign and idolatry	16:1-4	28:1-4
Invaded by Syria and Israel	16:5-6	28:5
Is confronted by Isaiah the prophet	Isa.7:1-25	
Pekah's great victory over him		28:6-8
Pekah's captives returned		28:9-15
He seeks help from Assyria	16:7-9	28:16-21
Worships the gods of Syria		28:22-23
Builds Syrian altars in Jerusalem	16:10-16	28:24-25
Desecrates the temple	16:17-18	
Death and burial	16:19-20	28:26-27

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESACCESSION - HIS EVIL REIGN AND JUDGEMENT 11 Chron. 28:1-5

V.2 - "ways of the kings of Israel" - He plunged Judah back into the apostacy of the house of Ahab. He had the support of the majority of the people. 11 Chron.27:2. This <sup>is</sup> a most significant phrase in view of verse 19. "molten images" - I.e. after Jeroboam's example - a complete lack of faith in Yahweh. While Jeroboam set out to represent Yahweh by molten images Ahaz refused to recognise him at all.

V.3 - "burnt incense" - This was perhaps worse than Uzziah's presumption - Ahaz offered his "prayers" to Molech.

"son of Hinnom" - Some say the name means "moaning", (from the moans of the children burnt to Molech). The valley or ravine on the south side of Jerusalem.

"burnt his children in the fire" - 11 Kings 16:3 says that "He made his son to pass through the fire". It may be that Ahaz offered some of his children as human sacrifices to Molech and that the son spoken of as "passing through" was Hezekiah. Ahaz was typical of parents who place their children in the lap of the world, by encouraging them in pursuits that may defile and corrupt their minds. Educational, vocational and recreational pursuits may all become "Molechs" if approached carelessly and with the wrong motivation.

V.4 - "on the hills" - Heights were regarded by the Canaanites as places to worship their gods, usually in a licentious way.

"every green tree" - Isaiah and later Jeremiah specially condemned the practices indulged in these places - Isa.57:5, Jer.2:20,3:6&13. Ezekiel likewise condemned them - Ezek.6:13.

V.5 - The record in Kings expands details of the Syrian and Israeli invasion.

### REZIN AND PEKAH INVADE JUDAH 11 Kings 16:5-9

V.5 - "Rezin" - "Delight", from the root to be pleased with.

"Pekah" - "Watch", from the root to open (the eyes).

"Remeliah" - "Yah has bedecked".

"came up" - An alliance had been forged between Israel and Syria with the purpose of annexing Judah and ousting the Davidic line - Yahweh determined to frustrate their purpose as Isaiah informed Ahaz. Isa.7:1-9.

V.6 - "Elath" - Reversing Uzziah's work, 11 Chron.26:2.

V.7 - "Ahaz sent messengers" - In spite of Isaiah's prophecy - Isa. 7:1-9.

"Tiglathpileser" - "My trust is in the son of Esharra", ie. the god Ninib. He was also known as Pul and reigned from B.C. 745-727. He was a mighty conqueror of the surrounding nations and introduced the system of deportation and relocation of conquered peoples.

"servant and son" - He should have been neither - Ahaz had rejected Yahweh and chose to serve Tiglathpileser. This reveals his shocking faithlessness.

V.8 - Ahaz desecrated the Temple to bribe Assyria - he had absolutely no regard for its sanctity.

V.9 - "went up against Damascus" - But not immediately as testified by history and 11 Chron. 28:21. Tiglathpileser first by-passed Damascus until he had swept through Israel, then he turned and attacked it in accordance with his own plans.

"took it" - TAPHAS - manipulate, ie. seize; to capture.

"to Kir" - "Fortress" - thus fulfilling Amos 1:5.

### ISAIAH CONFRONTS AHAZ Isa. 7:1-25

V.2 - "house of David" - Note the language - no reference to Ahaz. Perhaps this relates to Ahaz's subsequent rejection of his descent - 11 Kings 16:7.

"confederate" - NUWACH - to rest, ie. settle down.

"moved" - NUWA - to waver. As in the following description Ahaz was a weak, unstable, faithless character blown about by change of circumstances and the demands of expediency. Jude 13.

V.3 - "Isaiah" - "Yah is salvation". A sign in itself. Isa.8:18.

"Shear-Jashub" - "the remnant shall return" - and they did. 11 Chron.28.

"end of the conduit" - TE'ALAH - a channel. This was the virgins fountain which Hezekiah later sealed up.

"highway" - MEULLAH - a thoroughfare. (spec. a viaduct).

V.4 - "be quiet" - SHAQAT - to repose. Contrast v2.

"smoking firebrands" - UWD - a poker, (for turning embers). Roth. "these two fag-ends of smoking firebrands"

"son of Remaliah" - No name given - reveals Yahweh's contempt for Pekah, king of Israel.

V.6 - "vex it" - QUWTS - to clip off, (severing).

"breach" - BAQA - to cleave, to rend, rip open.

"son of Tabeal" - "Pleasing to God.

V.9 - "If ye will not believe" - Note margin, also Roth. "If ye trust not, surely ye cannot be trusted". This is a divine principle; the trusting can be trusted, you can have faith in men of faith. The distrustful can never be relied upon.

V.11 - "ask it either in the depth or in the height above" - Roth. "go down deep for a request, or ascend on high". Cp. ideas, Deut.30:11-14; and Rom.10:6-8.

V.12 - "I will not ask" - Ahaz's false display of humility reveals faithlessness. He simply did not believe in Yahweh. How could he admit of his existence by asking a sign of him?

V.13 - This reply is characteristic of Isaiah - he believed in Yahweh and made a difference between God and men. Ahaz however brought Yahweh down to the level of man and then rejected him in favour of Tiglathpileser.

### PEKAH'S CAPTIVES RETURNED 11 Chron. 28:6-15

V.7 "Zichri" - "memorable".

"Maaseiah" - "work of Yah".

"Azrikam" - "help of an enemy".

"Elkanah" - "God has obtained".

"next to the king" - RSV. "next in authority to the king".

V.9 - "Oded" - "reiteration".

"in a rage" - ZA'APH - anger, from the root, to boil up.

"reacheth up to heaven" - Roth. "Until to the heavens it hath reached".

V.10 - "now ye purpose" - AMAR - to say. RSV. "intend".

"keep under" - KABASH - to tread down, to disregard. Roth. "tread down".

"sins against Yahweh" - Roth. "Ye yourselves are altogether guilty against Yahweh.

V.11 - "fierce wrath" - CHAROWN - a burning of anger. Roth. "the glow of the anger of Yahweh is over you". Cp. v9 "wrath" - CHEMA - heat, anger - Yahweh was angry with Judah but fiercely angry with Israel.

V.12 - "Azariah" - "Yah hath helped".

"Johanan" - "Yahweh - favoured".

"Berechiah" - "blessing of Yah".

"Meshillemoth" - "reconciliations".

"Jehizkiah" - "strengthened of Yah" - same as Hezekiah.

"Shallum" - "a requital", ie, (secure) retribution.

"Amasa" - "burden".

"Hadlai" - "idle", from the root, rest.

"stood against" - These chiefs in Israel were not amongst the army returning victorious from Judah.

V.13 - "Ye shall not bring" - They stood in the way of the army's entrance. There was still some fibre left in Israel despite the long years of apostasy, however it did not run very deep.

"offended" - ASHMAH - guiltiness, a fault.

"intend" - AMAR - see v10 - "purpose", same word.

"our trespass is great" - An uncommon confession from Israel. Oded's words had taken effect - no true repentance followed however, thus Israel's judgement was near.

V.15 - "expressed by name" - An emphasis that those few of V12 were wholly responsible for this action.

"feeble" - KASHAL - to totter, waver. Roth. "exhausted".

"brought them to Jericho" - Probably to avoid renewed conflict with Judah as Jericho was near the border.

### AHAZ SEEKS HELP FROM ASSYRIA 11 Chron. 28:16-21

V.16 - Cp. this record with 11 Kings 16:7.

"to help" - AZAR - to surround ie. protect or aid.

V.17 - "Edomites" - The Edomites had recovered from Amaziah's victory, 11 Chron.25:11-12, and sought to avenge it.

"captives" - Heb. lit, a captivity. (note mg.)

V.18 - "Philistines" - They also had recovered from Uzziah's victory, 11 Chron.26:6-7.

"low country" - The Shephelah, 11 Chron.26:10. (the western seaboard of the land).

"Bethshemesh" - "house of the sun". The scene of Joash's defeat at the hands of Jehoash, 11 Chron.25:21.

"Ajalon" - "deer field".

"Gederoth" - "inclosure" (for flocks).

"Shocho" - "to entwine", ie shut in.

"Timnah" - "a portion assigned".

"Gimzo" - of uncertain derivation.

"dwelt there" - Thus reversing Uzziah's work.

V.19 - "low" - KANA - to bend the knee, humiliate.

V.19 - "Ahaz king of Israel" - He wasn't the king of Israel in reality, but the king of Judah. However he was as evil and faithless as any king of Israel and had reduced Judah to the same level, so he is described as "king of Israel", note v23 & 27.

"for he made Judah naked" - PARA - to loosen, by implication, to expose. Roth. "for he had given the rein in Judah". RSV. "dealt wantonly" - reminiscent of Jeroboam's divinely chosen epithet.

"transgressed sore" - Roth. "grievously unfaithful".

V.20 - "distressed him" - TSUWR - to cramp, ie confine.

"strengthened him not" - CHAZAQ - cp. the record of 11 Kings 16:9. There was a serious delay in help coming from Assyria.

V.21 - "helped him not" - Not until he had entered Judah and distressed Ahaz, and fulfilled his own political ambitions in the region.

### AHAZ WORSHIPS THE GODS OF SYRIA 11 Chron. 28:22-25

V.22 - "distress" - TSARAR - to cramp. Not even Assyria's failure to help him moved him to distrust human help and seek Yahweh.

"trespass" - Roth. "acted unfaithfully".

"this is that king Ahaz" - Roth. "he king Ahaz". RSV. "this is that same king Ahaz". This is a divine exclamation at what was a truly incredible apostasy. The chronicler appears almost incredulous that such perfidy was possible.

V.23 - "Damascus" - see the note v5. Syria was the beginning of his problems.

"gods of the kings of Syria" - He reasoned that initially his troubles came through Syria's success against him. The incredible thing was that Damascus was now in the hands of Assyria and Rezin was dead, 11 Kings 16:9-10.

"ruin" - KASHAL - to cause to stumble, see v15.

"of all Israel" - Cp. v19. Judah and Israel were virtually reunited under Ahaz. He was indistinguishable from the wicked kings of Israel, and his worship of Syria's gods was indeed the ruin of all Israel. Yahweh's judgement came through the power of Assyria which eventually destroyed Israel and later in its' Babylonian phase carried away Judah.

V.24 - "cut in pieces the vessels" - Roth. "brake away the fittings of the house of God".

"shut up the doors" - The first time a king of Judah had done this - he abolished the appointed worship of Yahweh.

"made him altars in every corner" - These altars were of foreign design to worship Syria's gods, 11 Kings 16:10-16. See also reference to Ahaz's work, 11 Kings 23:12.

V.25 - "every several city" - RSV. "in every city of Judah".

"to burn incense" - Ahaz would not ask for a sign from Yahweh but he was prepared to offer "prayer" unto other gods. (Psa.141:2)

"provoked to anger" - KA'AC - to trouble, by implication, to grieve, rage.

### AHAZ BUILDS SYRIAN ALTARS 11 Kings 16:10-16

V.10 - "went to Damascus" - apparently after the events of 11 Chron.28:20.

"Urijah" - "flame of Yah". Ironically the altar of burnt offering was fired by the flame of Yahweh.

V.10 - "fashion" - DEMUWTH - resemblance. Roth. "likeness".  
"workmanship" - The opposite to the Law, Exod.20:25.

V.12 - "the king approached to the altar" - He became his own priest at his own altar to his own gods.

V.13 - "burnt offering" - a symbol of dedication.  
"meat offering, and poured his drink offering" - Meal and drink offerings symbolic of "works". This was a complete paradox and hypocrisy.  
"blood of his peace offerings" - See Law, Lev.3:1-2. Symbol of fellowship through atonement.

V.14 - "brasen altar which was before Yahweh" - The altar of Burnt offering was moved from its original site to a position north of Ahaz's new altar thus placing the new altar in front of the temple with only the laver between - it was a case of dispensing with the significance of God's altar and relegating it to a position of non-importance.

V.15 - "great altar" - The following instructions given by Ahaz made this altar replace the brasen altar in every respect.  
"brasen altar" - Its purpose had been to provide atonement for Israel and to be the place where they signified their intention to serve Yahweh.  
"enquire" - BAQAR - to plough, or break forth, ie. in a figure, to inspect, admire, care for. Gray suggests that the Syrian practice was to watch movements in the entrails of newly slain sacrifices for "signs" that could be interpreted.

#### DESECRATION OF THE TEMPLE 11 Kings 16:17-18

V.17 - "borders of the bases" - RSV. "frames of the stands". Roth. "the side walls of the stands". These were the bases or stands spoken of in 1 Kings 7:23-30.

"laver" - A symbol of washing by the water of the word, Eph.5:26.  
"pavement of stones" - Ahaz probably appropriated the bronze for other purposes and set the laver, probably in some other position; in a pavement of stones. This doubtless made actual access to it easier if it was used at all.

V.18 - "covert for the sabbath" - "covert" is MEYCAK - a portico (as covered). Roth. "the covered walk". RSV. "covered way".

"kings entry" - The gate through which the king entered on the sabbath - cp. Ezek.46:1-2.

"turned he from the house" - Roth. "he changed in the house".

"for the king of Assyria" - Either to abide by a command to abolish such privilege for the king thus reducing him to a mere vassal; or because he wished to ingratiate himself with Tiglathpileser.

#### DEATH AND BURIAL 11 Chron. 28:26-27

V.27 - "they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings" - A clear sign that Ahaz was not loved or respected by the people - they could not place him amongst kings that they did respect and honour.

# ZACHARIAH - The Unfortunate

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Yah hath remembered".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 14:29

LAST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:11

LENGTH OF REIGN - 6 months (754)

FATHER - Jeroboam 11

CONTEMPORARY KING - Uzziah B.C. (791)766-740.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The dynasty of Jehu lasted nearly 100 years in accordance with the promise that his sons would reign in Israel to the fourth generation. Zachariah the son of Jeroboam 11 came to the throne and within 6 months was assassinated by Shallum. He was no more and no less deserving of divine punishment than his fathers, for all had been evil kings who "departed not from the sins of Jeroboam". The only reason they had been preserved was that Yahweh faithfully fulfilled his promise to Jehu.

Zachariah died justly because of his sins and apostasy; it was simply his misfortune that he was the fourth generation from Jehu. His predecessors who were equally worthy of a similar death were fortunate to arrive on the scene earlier than he.

## SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF ZACHARIAH

	<u>11 Kings</u>
Accession upon the death of Jeroboam 11	14:29
Divine estimation of his reign	15:8-9
Assassinated by Shallum	15:10
Fulfillment of the promise to Jehu	15:11-12

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

### HIS WICKED REIGN AND ASSASSINATION 11 Kings 15:8-12

V.10 - "smote him before the people" - R.S.V. - "struck him down at Ibleam". Roth. retains the A.V. while Gray says Ibleam, and this would be poetic justice as Jehu slew Ahaziah there, 11 Kings 9:27.

V.11 - The other record has not been preserved by Yahweh - a testimony to his insignificance.

V.12 - "This was the word of Yahweh" - Zachariah was no better and no worse than his fathers but unfortunately he was the fourth generation after Jehu and was thus doomed - 11 Kings 10:30, Amos 7:9.

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# SHALLUM - The Ephemeral

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "A requital" ie. (secure) retribution.

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:10

LAST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:15

LENGTH OF REIGN - 1 month during 753 B.C.

FATHER - Jabesh - "Dry", from root; to be ashamed, confused.

CONTEMPORARY KING - Uzziah B.C. (791)766-740.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Shallum is one of the many figures to emerge in the record as Israel entered the turbulent period of its final years as a kingdom. The death throes of this once great nation as portrayed in Kings is truly a tragic spectacle. Israel was torn to pieces by political feuding as ambitious and cruel men strove together to obtain supreme power. Most who achieved their aim met violent deaths at the hands of other aspirants to the throne.

Shallum was no exception. He was assassinated after one month and the only thing highlighted in the record is the brevity of his reign. Nothing is said concerning his character or his brief reign but we may assume from the account of his conspiracy and assassination of Zachariah that he was an ambitious, cold-blooded murderer who sought power for its own sake.

## SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF SHALLUM

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Assassinates and succeeds Zachariah	15:10	
Reigns for one month	15:13	
Assassinated by Menahem	15:14	
Final summary	15:15	

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

### ASSASSINATION BY MENAHEM 11 Kings 15:13-15

V.13 - "a full month" - Heb. a month of days.

V.14 - "Tirzah" - "delightsome". It was the old capital. Gray comments that the Syrian records of the period suggest that because Shallum was "the son of a nobody" he was removed.

V.15 - Again no other record has been preserved.

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# MENAHEM - The Rapacious Exactor

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Comforter".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:14

LAST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:23

LENGTH OF REIGN - 10 years from B.C. 753-742.

FATHER - Gadi - "fortunate".

CONTEMPORARY KING - Uzziah B.C.791-740, Jotham (as co-regent) B.C.750-734.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The account of Menahem's reign is brief but adequate to reveal him as a brutal murderer and a harsh exactor. He assassinated Shallum and then cruelly disposed of his followers in his hometown of Tiphseh. In accomplishing this task he distinguished himself by becoming the only king of Israel or Judah to adopt the Assyrian practise of "ripping up" women carrying children. He committed this abominable crime in the revengeful spirit of a frustrated tyrant "because they opened not to him".

Apart from his adherence to Jeroboam's idolatry the other important thing recorded of him is that under the burden of a heavy tribute placed upon him by Tiglathpileser, he exacted the required sum from the wealthy men of Israel in order to establish himself in power.

## SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF MENAHEM

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Assassinates Shallum and succeeds him	15:14	
Massacres Shallum's followers	15:16	
Divine estimation of his reign	15:17-18	
Bribes the king of Assyria	15:19-20	
Death and final summary	15:21-22	

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

### HIS ACCESSION AND EVIL REIGN 11 Kings 15:16-18

V.16 - "Tiphseh" - "ford". A town in Mesopotamia near the Euphrates on the extreme outer fringe of Solomon's old empire. Probably not a Jewish city, however it could be that this was another town in Israel near to Tirzah. Gray says it was Tappuah, 14 miles s.s.w. of Tirzah the home of Shallum. "ripped up" - This was an Assyrian practise and was also used by Syria, 11 Kings 8:12 and Ammon, Amos 1:13. This savage treatment was used on Shallum's followers.

ASSYRIA BRIBED TO RETURN 11 Kings 15:19-20

V.19 - "Pul" - or Tiglathpileser 111 (743 - 726).

"thousand talents of silver" - approx. \$1,430,000. (appendix RSV)

"to confirm the kingdom" - CHAZAQ - to seize. Evidently Menahem had difficulties subduing his own people and the entrance of Assyria posed another threat to his rule.

V.20 - "exacted" - YATSA - to go (wide). Note margin. "caused to go forth".

THE KINGS OF ASSYRIA

Ashurnasirpal 11	B.C. 883 - 859
Shalmaneser 111	858 - 824
Shamsi-Adad V	823 - 811
Adad-Nirari 111	810 - 783
Shalmaneser 1V	782 - 773
Ashur-Dan 111	772 - 755
Ashur-Nirari V	754 - 745
Tiglathpileser 111	744 - 725
Shalmaneser V	726 - 722
Sargon 11	721 - 705
Sennacherib	704 - 681
Esarhaddon	680 - 669
Ashurbanipal	668 - 626
Ashur-Etil-Ilani	625 - ?
Sin-Shum-Lishir	? - 622
Sin-Shar-Ishkun	621 - 612
Nineveh overthrown	612

THE RULERS OF BABYLON

Merodach Baladan	B.C. 721 - 703
(Babylon destroyed by Sennacherib of Assyria - 703 B.C.)	
Nabopolassar (founder of Chaldean empire)	625 - 605
Nebuchadnezzar	605 - 562
Amel-Marduk	562 - 560
Neriglissar	560 - 556
Nabonidus	555 - 539
(Belshazzar his son co-regent during 539 B.C.)	

# PEKALAH - The Obscure

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Yah has observed" - from root, to open (the senses or eyes).

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:22

LAST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:26

LENGTH OF REIGN - 2 years.

From B.C. 742-741.

FATHER - Menahem.- "comforter".

CONTEMPORARY KING - Uzziah B.C.791-740, Jotham B.C.750-734.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Obscurity shrouds the brief reign of the son and successor of Menahem. Little is recorded of him except that he like all his predecessors persisted in the idolatry of Jeroboam.

The absence of any account of his acts may indicate that he was an inactive and colourless man who achieved nothing noteworthy during his short tenancy of Israel's throne. His assassination by Pekah in the palace of Samaria and his unawareness of a conspiracy against him lend weight to this view. Only one thing is certain - Pekalah will always be obscure because of his evils against Yahweh.

## SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF PEKALAH

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession upon death of Menahem	15:22	
Divine estimation of his reign	15:23-24	
Assassinated by Pekah	15:25	
Final summary	15:26	

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

### EVIL REIGN AND ASSASSINATION 11 Kings 15:23-26

V.25 - "a captain of his" - SHALOSH - a triple - (a General of the third rank upward, ie. the highest). Roth. "a hero of his".

"with Argob" - "stony". A fellow conspirator.

"Arieh" - "lion".

"Gileadites" - Pekah was evidently a Gileadite.

# PEKAH -

## The Contemptible

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Watch" - from the root, to open (the senses or eyes).

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:25

LAST MENTION - Isa.7:1

LENGTH OF REIGN - 20 years from B.C. 740-732/1.

FATHER - Remaliah - "Yah has bedecked".

CONTEMPORARY KING - Jotham B.C. 750-734, Ahaz B.C.734-715.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

An insight into Pekah's character comes not from the record of Kings but from the prophecy of Isaiah to Ahaz king of Judah in Isa.7. Isaiah's prophecy relates to the invasion of Judah by Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel, and the most noticeable thing about it is the contempt shown for the two confederate kings by Yahweh; "Fear not... for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah". Not once does Yahweh mention the name of Pekah but calls him "the son of Remaliah". It is clear that Pekah was a hateful man; an ambitious ruler of a severely weakened kingdom who abandoned all principles in order to confederate with an equally weakened Syria for the sake of political survival. His bitter hatred of "the house of David" was known by Yahweh who determined to defend Judah and destroy Pekah.

### SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF PEKAH

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Assassinates and succeeds Pekaiah	15:25	
Divine estimation of his reign	15:27-28	
Makes an alliance with Syria		<u>Isa.7:1-9</u>
Campaign against Ahaz successful		28:5-8
His captives sent back		28:9-15
Attacked by Tiglathpileser of Assyria	15:29	
Assassinated by Hoshea	15:30	
Final summary	15:31	

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### EVIL REIGN AND ASSASSINATION 11 Kings 15:27-31

V.27 - "two and fiftieth year of Azariah" - the year that Uzziah died, Isa.6:1.

V.29 - "came Tiglathpileser" - During 734 BC. This invasion came in Pekah's third to last year and he was soon afterwards murdered by Hoshea. Tiglathpileser wrote in his annals "they overthrew their king Peqaha and I placed Ausi (Hoshea) as king over them".

"Ijon" - "ruin" - in the extreme north of Israel.

V.29 - "Abel-beth-maachah" - "meadow of the house of depression".

"Janoah" - "quiet" - from the root to deposit.

"Kedesh" - "a sanctum" - from the root to be clean.

"Hazor" - "village".

"Gilead" - "heap of witness".

"Galilee" - "a circle".

"all the land of Naphthali" - An area north from a line drawn from the southern point of Lake Galilee to Mt. Carmel. This captivity virtually removed effective control of  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Israel's territory from Pekah - it was the beginning of the end now only 9 years away.

"captive to Assyria" - The policy of removing and resettling inhabitants of conquered lands was pursued by Assyria to minimise unrest and revolt.

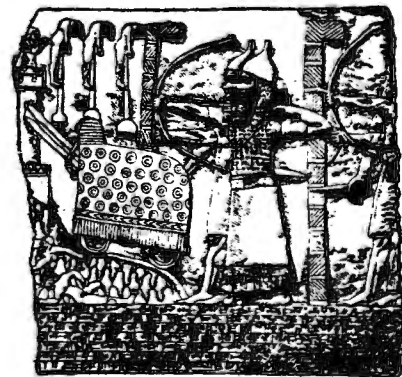
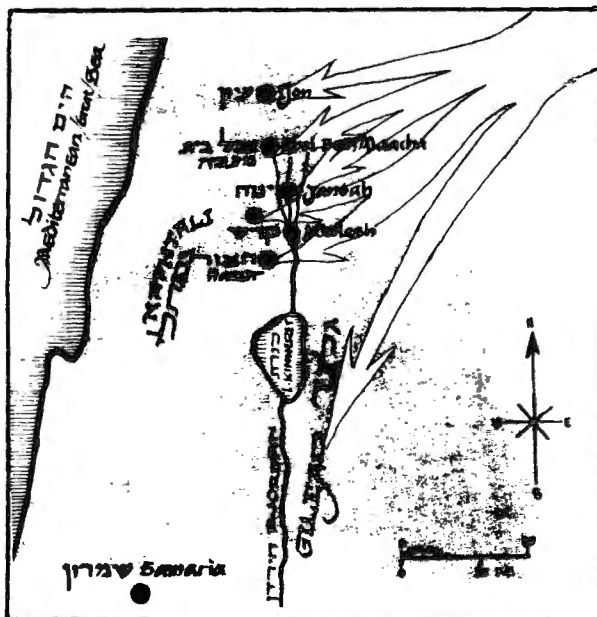
### PEKAH'S SUCCESSFUL WAR WITH JUDAH 11 Chron. 28:5-6

See notes on "Ahaz".

### PEKAH'S ALLIANCE WITH REZIN Isa. 7:1-9

V.1 - This was either to forcibly secure Judah's agreement to a tri-partite pact against Assyria or at least to neutralise Judah thus clearing Israel and Syria's rear.

Note the term of contempt, "son of Remaliah" to describe Pekah, Vv 4,5 & 9.



AN ASSYRIAN SIEGE.

The second Assyrian invasion of Israel during the reign of Pekah.

# HOSHEA -

## The Treacherous

(ISRAEL)

HEBREW - "Deliverer".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 15:30

LAST MENTION - 11 Kings 18:10

LENGTH OF REIGN - 9 years. From B.C.731-723.

FATHER - Elah - "an oak".

CONTEMPORARY KING - Ahaz B.C.734-715, Hezekiah B.C.729-686.

SIGNIFICANT - Israel was led into the land by a Hoshea (Joshua) and out of it by another Hoshea.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Hoshea the last king of Israel is distinguished both by name and attitude to Jeroboam's idolatry. It is significant that a Hoshea (or Joshua - an Ephraimite, Num.13:16) led Israel into the land and another Hoshea led them out of it. It is also ironical that at the end of Israel's polity a king should finally emerge who rejected the idols of Jeroboam, when all preceding kings had assiduously pursued it for the same reasons as Jeroboam - political survival, yet Hoshea was the king who presided over the dissolution of Israel.

Nevertheless, Hoshea was worthy of the judgement which fell upon his kingdom. While he may not have pursued Jeroboam's idolatry he was an unrighteous and evil man, not at all disposed to manifest faith in Yahweh. Perhaps his lack of interest in Jeroboam's calf worship was due to the fact that it was now of little consequence in preserving his kingdom from the effect of Israelites going up to Jerusalem to worship. Of far greater import now was the ominous presence of the super-power Assyria to the north which threatened to swallow up the emaciated kingdom of Israel.

As a vassal of Shalmaneser king of Assyria, the only observable characteristic of Hoshea in the record emerges and that is his treachery. Having submitted himself to Shalmaneser he undertook covert negotiations with the king of Egypt in an attempt to toss off the Assyrian yoke. The conspiracy was exposed and Hoshea was incarcerated in an Assyrian prison, never to be heard of again.

### SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF HOSHEA

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Assassinates and succeeds Pekah	15:30	
Divine estimation of his reign	17:1-2	
Becomes the vassal of Assyria	17:3	
Imprisoned for conspiracy against Assyria	17:4	
Samaria besieged by the King of Assyria	17:5 & 18:9	
Israel goes into captivity	17:6 & 18:10-12	

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESACCESSION AND EVIL REIGN 11 Kings 17:1-2

V.2 - His evil was not as bad as his predecessors. Perhaps he had little interest in Jeroboam's idolatry. It is ironical that the last king of Israel should be unique in not following the idolatry of Jeroboam which all his predecessors had done.

VASSAL AND PRISONER OF ASSYRIA 11 Kings 17:3-4

V.3 - "Shalmaneser" - BC. 727 -722. "Sulman is exalted". This military expedition was probably around 725 BC.

"servant" - EBED - a servant.

"gave him presents" - MINCHAH - tribute. Roth. "rendered him a present".

V.4 - "found conspiracy" - RSV. "found treachery".

"So king of Egypt" - Unknown in secular history. As Egypt and Assyria were to become mortal enemies in a struggle for world supremacy So was the best hope for a faithless man like Hoshea.

"shut him up" - It seems that he was captured when in the process of negotiating with So. In prison he could not lead Israel in war - they were "king-less."

THE SIEGE OF SAMARIA 11 Kings 17:5

V.5 - "three years" - From late 725 BC. to 723 BC - 722.

THE CAPTIVITY AND THE REASON FOR IT 11 Kings 17:6-23

V.6 - "ninth year" - Compares with 6th year of Hezekiah.

"Halah" - On the banks of the Khabour, near Gozan in Assyria.

"Habor" - "united" - A river of Mesopotamia identified with the modern Khabur. Flows south through Gozan into the Euphrates. Here they joined the captives of Tiglathpileser's earlier campaign. 1 Chron.5:26.

"Gozan" - "a quarry". A province of Assyria.

"Medes" - Ie. further east of Gozan. Roth. "mountains of Media".

V.7 - "under the hand of Pharaoh" - Egypt was the source of Jeroboam's apostasy which was perpetuated throughout Israel's history.

V.9 - "secretly" - CHAPHA - to cover, to act covertly.

"tower of the watchman" - Ie. in the open fields.

THE MIXED WORSHIP OF THE SAMARITANS 11 Kings 17:24-41

V.24 - "Cuthah" - A province in Babylon.

"Ava" - "overthrow" - a region in Assyria.

"Hamath" - "walled" - north of Israel in Syria.

"Sepharvaim" - near Hamath.

V.28 - "Bethel" - Irony - this was the home of Jeroboam's apostasy.

V.30 - "Succoth - Benoth" - "booths of the daughters" ie. brothels.

V.31 - "Adrammelech" - "splendour of the king".

V.32 - "lowest"- QATSAH - an extremity, ie. from the whole range of the people - the same word used of Jeroboam, 1 Kings 12:31; 13:33.

# HEZEKIAH -

## Yahweh's Trusting Servant

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Strengthened of Yah".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 16:20

LAST MENTION - Zeph. 1:1

LENGTH OF REIGN - 29 years

From B.C. (729)714-686

AGE AT ACCESSION - 25

AT DEATH - 54

FATHER - Ahaz - "Possessor"; from root, to seize.

MOTHER - Abijah - "Yah his father".

CONTEMPORARY KINGS - Hoshea B.C. 731-723.

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Hezekiah was the greatest king of Judah and Israel since David the beloved of Yahweh had occupied the throne of Israel 270 years earlier. The fact that he was the son of Ahaz and came to the throne while Judah was steeped in idolatry and moral corruption only serves to emphasise his greatness. Hezekiah is unique among the kings of the divided kingdom and the divine chronicler provided a full account of his reign and achievements. In the greater part of the three accounts of his reign he is presented as a wonderful type of the Lord Jesus Christ, the suffering servant of Yahweh.

The singular most important characteristic of Hezekiah that made him stand out from all his predecessors except David was his implicit trust in Yahweh; "He trusted in Yahweh God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him." This indomitable faith in Yahweh carried Hezekiah through many great and severe trials and preserved his integrity to the end of his life.

"Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God", hence it is not surprising to find affixed to the statement concerning his faith quoted above, the following words; "For he clave to Yahweh and departed not from following Him, but kept His commandments, which Yahweh commanded Moses." The word of God was the source of Hezekiah's faith and it is clear that he had turned to it in spite of the corrupt practices of his father Ahaz.

Hezekiah patterned his life upon his father David and waited eagerly for the time when he would have the power to set about reversing Ahaz's apostasy and re-establishing the Temple services and the worship of Yahweh as it existed in the days of David. He utterly repudiated the policies of Ahaz and it is not without significance that his mother's name was Abijah - "Yah his father".

The first thing that Hezekiah did upon ascending the throne, evidently on the first day of his reign was to open the doors of the house of God which Ahaz had shut up. This was an act that symbolised the charac-



Hezekiah of Judah

ter of his entire reign. He opened the doors of the ecclesia to all who would enter upon the basis of faith and truth. Hezekiah set out to recover Judah from apostasy and in doing so involved both the stranger and the remnant of Israel in the north. He desired to see all who were willing to respond, brought into fellowship with God and enjoying the benefits of "peace and truth in his days."

Following his accession near the turn of the year Hezekiah immediately assembled and sanctified the priests and Levites in a desperate bid to cleanse and repair the Temple in preparation for the Passover on the 14th of Abib. They had two weeks to perform all the necessary tasks but because of the filthy condition of the Temple and the extent of the damage inflicted upon it by Ahaz the work was not completed until the 16th of Abib. Too late for the Passover! Undaunted however, Hezekiah resorted to the provisions of Num. 9:10-14 and planned for a "second Passover" and prepared the people of Judah for it by holding a special service of rededication to Yahweh which resulted in such fervour and zeal on the part of the people that the priesthood proved inadequate to handle the volume of offerings made by them. Spontaneous rejoicing in the things of the Truth gripped the nation "and Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people; for the thing was done suddenly".

Hezekiah immediately sent messengers to "all Israel and Judah" inviting them to attend the Passover to be kept in the second month. The response from Judah was overwhelming and many from Israel also "humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem". The Passover that followed has gone down in history as the greatest since the time of Solomon for one important reason: the entire nation responded from the heart with gladness that they had rediscovered "Yahweh Elohim of their fathers", and eagerly craved "the good knowledge of Yahweh" taught by the Levites encouraged and instructed by Hezekiah himself. The unity of mind and national zeal produced by Hezekiah's reformation was never seen again after his death. It was one of those rare occasions when the Truth had deeply penetrated the hearts and minds of the people of Judah.

Eradication of idolatry throughout the land and even in Israel by the people themselves quickly followed, while Hezekiah thoroughly reorganised the priesthood, the Temple and its services on the pattern established by David and Solomon. Hezekiah was highly commended for this work and for his uprightness and integrity as he carefully sought to observe every commandment of his God. He was mightily blessed because "in every work that he began in the service of the house of God...he did it with all his heart and prospered." This is a wonderful example to all who work in the service of the "House of God" today.

The great test of Hezekiah's faith came in his fourteenth year. Sennacherib king of Assyria descended upon the land from the north and captured 46 cities of Judah. In this extremity Hezekiah reversed his previous policy towards Assyria and attempted to appease Sennacherib with the treasures of the Palace and Temple. He quickly realised the folly of this policy and diligently set about preparing for a siege while encouraging the people to put their trust in Yahweh. The beautiful words of 11 Chron. 32:7-8 stand as a testimony to Hezekiah's faith and complete trust in Yahweh. After receiving the blasphemous ultimatum of Rabshakeh, Hezekiah went up to the house of God and then sent messengers to Isaiah seeking his intercession. Yahweh quickly answered through Isaiah with an encouraging message of support, and when Sennacherib sent a letter to Hezekiah warning him not to trust in Yahweh he went up to the Temple and laid it before Yahweh and offered a truly wonder-

ful prayer of faith and confidence in his God.

It was at the height of this crisis that Hezekiah was stricken with a form of leprosy and was informed by Isaiah that it would be fatal. More adverse circumstances can scarcely be imagined - Judah was in the middle of an invasion by the world's most powerful monarch who was about to march on Jerusalem the last stronghold of the nation; the king whose unswerving faith had sustained the nation in the face of this threat was now about to die, and moreover the house of David was on the brink of extinction because Hezekiah had no son who could carry on the Davidic line. In the face of this overwhelming adversity Hezekiah, lying stricken upon his death-bed turned to the only source of help that he knew could reverse the situation. The spontaneity and intensity of his supplication to Yahweh and the complete genuineness of his words and his bitter tears were only subsequently matched by the last words of the Lord, upon the cross. Yahweh immediately responded to Hezekiah's prayer because his suffering servant had revealed absolute integrity and complete trust in him under the severest trial.

Hezekiah recovered, the Assyrians were overthrown and Hezekiah amassed great wealth and was internationally celebrated as a result of these dramatic developments. Yahweh had done "great things", for Hezekiah "whereof he was glad". "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem". What a wonderful God is Yahweh - his treatment of his servants is predicated upon their response to him. Hezekiah's plaintive cry for help produced magnificent blessings, but his pride brought Yahweh's wrath upon him and the nation.

Hezekiah soon recovered from this lapse into self-reliance and humbled himself so that the wrath came not upon them in his days. He died as he had begun - a man full of faith and trust in Yahweh.

#### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH

	<u>11 Chron.</u>	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>Isaiah</u>
Began to reign at 25	29:1-2	18:1-3	
Commands to cleanse the Temple	29:3-11		
Levites cleanse themselves first	29:12-15		
Temple cleansed in 16 days	29:16-19		
Seven-fold sacrifices offered	29:20-30		
People make personal offerings	29:31-36		
Hezekiah invites all Israel to Passover	30:1-12		
The land cleansed of idolatry	31:1	18:4	
Establishes course of Priesthood	31:2-4		
People bring tithes	31:5-10		
Officers to dispose of tithes	31:11-19		
Yahweh well pleased with Hezekiah	31:20-21	18:5-6	
He rebels against Assyria		18:7	
He attacks Philistia		18:8	14:28-32
4th year Shalmaneser beseiged Samaria		18:9	
6th year Sargon takes Samaria		18:10-12	
Assyria threatens Judah			10:27-34
She sweeps south to Ashdod & Philistia			20:1
Judah suggests turning to Egypt			20:2-6, 30
Isaiah rebukes them for lack of faith			22:1-7
Some rested in their own strength			22:8-14
Also a self-righteous Shebna class			22:15-19
Also a faithful Eliakim class			22:20-25

	<u>11 Chron.</u>	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>Isaiah</u>
46 cities of Judah fall to Sennacherib		18:13	36:1
Hezekiah agrees to pay tribute		18:14	
He strips gold from the Temple		18:15-16	
He prepares to defend Jerusalem	32:1		
He strengthens the defences of the city	32:2-8		
Sennacherib sends Rabshakeh	32:9	18:17-18	36:2
Rabshakeh's blasphemous speech	32:10-16	18:19-25	36:3-22
Hezekiah approaches Yahweh		19:1	37:1
He sends messengers to Isaiah		19:2-5	37:2-5
Yahweh's comforting reply		19:6-7	37:6-7
Rabshakeh returns to Lachish		19:8	37:8
Rumour concerning Tirhakah		19:9	37:9
Second message to Hezekiah	32:17-19	19:10-13	37:10-13
Hezekiah prays for deliverance	32:20	19:14-19	37:14-20
Isaiah's comforting reply		19:20-34	37:21-35
Hezekiah stricken with illness	32:24	20:1	38:1
He prays to be healed	32:24	20:2-3	38:2-3
15 year extension of life granted	32:24	20:4-11	38:4-8
Hezekiah's recovery & psalm of praise			38:9-22
Sennacherib and his army destroyed	32:21-23	19:35-37	37:36-38
Merodach-Baladan's embassy	32:25-31	20:12-18	39:1-7
Peace and truth in his days		20:19	39:8

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Kings 18:1-3

V.2 - "Zachariah" - "Yah hath remembered".

V.3 - "David his father" - Hezekiah is compared with David for he was like him in many respects; chiefly in his absolute sincerity and integrity. Note the total exclusion of Ahaz - it is also significant that Hezekiah's mother was named Abijah, "Yah his father".

#### SUMMARY OF HIS EARLY REIGN 11 Kings 18:4-8

V.4 - "images" - a column, an idol. Roth. "pillars".

"groves" - ASHERAH - (fem), Phoenician fertility goddess.

"brass serpent" - See Num.21:8-9 (cp. John3:14-15). A type of the flesh crucified. There is no reference to the "pole" to suspend it as recorded in Numbers. Hence this is symbolic of the flesh uncrucified which was Judah's state. The serpent of brass possessed no intrinsic power but Judah now worshipped it as an idol - not for its past connotations so much as its visible presence.

"Nehushtan" - Something made of copper. Roth. (margin) "a bronze thing" - the idea being that it was powerless.

V.5 - "trusted" - BATACH - to make haste for refuge, hence to trust.

"among all the kings of Judah" - i.e. from Rehoboam down. Cp. Josiah (who turned to the Law) 11 Kings 23:25. Hezekiah had no peer when it came to implicit child-like faith in God. The narrative of his life which follows amply illustrates this fact.

V.6 - "clave" - DABAQ - to impinge, ie. cling or adhere. RSV. "held fast".  
"from following" - Heb. "from after him".

V.7 - "prospered" - SAKAL - to be circumspect and hence intelligent.  
"Assyria" - Unlike Ahaz his father he committed his future into Yahweh's hands, and tossed off Assyrian interference.

V.8 - "smote the Philistines" - They had attacked Ahaz and taken some territory in the Shephelah, 11 Chron.28:18.

"Gaza" - AZZAH - "strong".

"tower of the watchman" - Ie. from the open fields (where towers were built) to the cities.

### THE TEMPLE OPENED - THE LEVITES INSTRUCTED 11 Chron.29:3-11

V.3 - "first month" - Whether this is the month Abib or the first month of his reign is not clear - it is certain that the events described occurred almost immediately Hezekiah came to the throne. It seems that Hezekiah's accession occurred just prior to the end of a calendar year.

"opened the doors" - Ahaz had closed them, 11 Chron.28:24. This was the first thing Hezekiah did; opened the doors of the house of God to reverse his father's policy.

"repaired" - CHAZAQ - to be strong.

V.4 - "east street" - Roth. "in the Broadway on the east". RSV. "in the square on the east".

V.5 - "sanctify" - QADASH - to be clean.

"filthiness" - NIDDAH - rejection by impl. impurity, especially personal (menstruation) or moral (idolatry, etc). Roth. "take forth the impure thing". RSV. "the filth".

V.6 - "turned away their faces" - Lit. "turned round their faces".

"habitation" - a faithful view - he saw the temple as God's dwelling.

"turned their backs" - Roth. "have offered their backs". "backs" - OREPH - the nape or back of the neck. Translated often as "stiffnecked" 11 Chron.30:8. A symbol of resistance to divine impressions, stubbornness and immalleability, Prov.29:1.

V.7 - "porch" - ULAM - vestibule. The closing of the temple doors shut off access to God - putting out the lamps (cessation of combustion of oil of Word to produce light) - cessation of offerings of dedication; all reveal the path of decline. Separation from God, failure to study the Word hence a failure of faith and dedication.

V.8 - "wrath" - QETSEPH - a splinter (as chipped off) figuratively, rage or strife.

"trouble" - ZA'AVAH - agitation, maltreatment.

"astonishment" - SHAMMAH - ruin, by implication consternation.

"hissing" - SHEREQAH - a derision. Hezekiah clearly based his words upon Deut.28.

"with your eyes" - Roth. "even as you can see with your own eyes".

V.9 - Evidently a reference to Ahaz's defeats.

V.10 - "Now it is in mine heart" - Roth. "Now it is near my heart".  
"fierce wrath" - Roth. "may turn from him the glow of his anger".

V.11 - "be not now negligent" - SHALAH - to mislead. Roth. "now; do not be faulty", ie. as Ahaz had caused them to be.

### THE LEVITES CLEANSE THE TEMPLE 11 Chron. 29:12-19

V.12 - "Mahath" - "erasure", 1 Chron.6:35. "Amasai" - "Yah has loaded".  
"Joel" - "Yahweh is God". "Azariah" - "Yah hath helped".  
"Kish" - "a bow". "Abdi" - "serviceable".  
"Jehalelel" - "praising God". "Joah" - "Yahweh-brothered".  
"Zimmah" - "a plan" (a bad one). "Eden" - "pleasure".

V.13 - "Elizaphan" - "God of treasure". "Shimri" - "watchful".  
"Jeiel" - "carried away of God". "Asaph" - "collector".  
"Zechariah" - "Yah hath remembered". "Mattaniah" - "gift of Yah".

V.14 - "Heman" - "faithful". "Jehiel" - "God will live".  
"Shimei" - "famous". "Jeduthun" - "laudatory".  
"Shemaiah" - "Yah has heard". "Uzziel" - "strength of God".

V.15 - "sanctified" - Roth. "hallowed".  
"by the words" - Roth. "in the things of Yahweh".

V.16 - "uncleaness" - Roth. "every unclean thing".  
"Kidron" - See 11 Chron. 15:16, 30:14; 11 Kings 23:4-12.

V.17 - "sixteenth day of the first month" - This was too late for keeping the Passover by 2 days.

V.19 - "all the vessels" - Cp. 11 Chron.28:24.

### SACRIFICES OF REDEDICATION OFFERED 11 Chron. 29:20-36

V.21 - "seven" - The Law prescribed one bullock for the sins of the High Priest; one for the people; one he-goat for the Prince; but Hezekiah saw that Judah's (ie. Ahaz's) apostasy was so great that additional sacrifice was required.

V.25 - "set Levites" - A return to David's appointments - 1 Chron.15:16-22; 16:4-6,42.

V.27 - Cp. Eph.5:19-20; Col.3:16.

V.28 - Roth. "And all the convocation were bowing themselves in prostration".

V.29 - "present" - MATSA - to come forth, appear or exist.

V.31 - "consecrated" - MALA YAD - to fill the hand.  
"free heart" - NADIYB - voluntary, ie generous. RSV. "willing".

V.34 - "did help them" - Roth. "strengthened them".

V.36 - "rejoiced" - SAMACH - to brighten up, ie. be blithe or gleesome.  
 "prepared the people" - KUWN - to be erect, to set up. fix, establish. RSV.  
 "because of what God had done for the people". Roth. "because God had established it for the people".  
 "suddenly" - RSV. "for the thing came about suddenly".

### THE PASSOVER PROCLAIMED 11 Chron. 30:1-12

V.1 "all Israel" - Connect and contrast 11 Chron.28:19,27. Hezekiah's campaign extended to the northern tribes - Israel was about to disappear - Hoshea was weak and a vassal of Assyria. This was a desperate bid by Hezekiah to save a remnant from Israel.

"to Ephraim and Manasseh" - On the eve of Israel's dissolution these were the principal tribes - cp. Gen.48:15-22.

V.2 - "counsel" - YA'ATS - to advise, to deliberate, resolve. This Passover was a co-operative effort - contrast Josiah's, 11 Chron.35:1.

"second month" - A sound reading of Judah's position in regard to the Law, Num.9:10-14.

V.3 - "sufficiently" - Roth. "in sufficient numbers".

V.4 - "pleased" - YASHAR AYIN - Lit. straight (in his) eyes.

V.5 - "established" - AMAD - to stand.

"not done it" - Roth. "for not for a long time had they kept it as written".

V.6 - "posts" - RUWTS - to run (to rush). Roth. "runners".

"he will return to the remnant" - Return is SHUWB and remnant is SHA'AR. Connect Isa.7:3.

"escaped" - Roth. "that which is left to you".

V.7 - "desolation" - SHAMMAH - ruin, by implication consternation.

V.8 - "be ye not stiffnecked" - QASHAH OREPH - to be dense, or tough; the nape or back of the neck. Roth. "now do not stiffen your neck".

"yield yourselves" - NATHAN YAD - to give the hand (an open one - indicating power, means, direction). Roth. "stretch forth the hand". (Mg. in pledge).

V.9 - Enunciates a well founded principle - Psa.106:46; Jer.29:12-14.

"gracious" - CHANNUWN - from the root CHANAN - to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior, to favour.

"merciful" - RACHUWN - compassionate, from the root RACHAM - to fondle, by implication to love.

V.10 - "laugh" - SACHAQ - to laugh, by implication to play.

"mocked" - LA'AG - to deride, by implication (as if imitating a foreigner) to speak unintelligibly.

V.11 - "divers" - ENOWSH - a mortal man (to be frail, feeble).

V.12 - Roth. "And also upon Judah came the hand of God to give them one heart".

HEZEKIAH'S GREAT PASSOVER 11 Chron. 30:13-27

V.14 - "altars" - the altars of Ahaz, 11 Kings 16:10-16.

V.15 - "ashamed" - KALAM - to wound. Roth. and RSV. "were put to shame". The zeal of the people put the nation's spiritual leaders to shame.

"sanctified" - Roth. "hallowed".

V.16 - "stood in their place" - RSV. "they took their accustomed posts".

V.18 - "Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun" - Galilee the home of Christ's disciples.

"cleansed" - TAHER - to be bright, ie. to be pure (uncontaminated).

"otherwise than it was written" - Permissible only because of the spirit that pervaded them - purity is essential in approach to Yahweh. The Law was inflexible but Yahweh accepted the remnant of Israel, moved as they were by a desire to return to him.

"Hezekiah prayed" - His intercessory prayer reveals the only grounds upon which there could be a relaxation of the stipulations of the Law.

V.19 - "prepareth" - KUWN - to be erect, to fix, establish, set up.

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

"though he be not cleansed" - Roth. "though not according to the purification of the sanctuary". Much may be forgiven if only the heart is right. The removal of competitors for our service and love of Yahweh is the first step.

V.20 - "healed" - RAPHA - to mend, to cure.

V.21 - "great gladness" - SIMCHAH - glee. Roth "great rejoicing".

"loud instruments" - Roth. "instruments of strength" (Mg.). RSV. "with all their might". 1 Chron.13:8.

V.22 - "comfortably" - AL LEB - upon, above, the heart. Roth. "spoke unto the heart". (Mg. mind). RSV. "spoke encouragingly".

"taught the good knowledge" - Roth. "who were giving good instruction respecting Yahweh". RSV. "who shewed good skill in the service of Yahweh".

"making confession" - Roth. "offering praise". RSV. "giving thanks".

V.23 - "took counsel" - RSV. "agreed together". Usually the effort of one week would be enough but such was the spirit of the ecclesia that they agreed unanimously to another week of special effort and worship.

"gladness" - SIMCAH - glee. Roth. "rejoicing". ie. genuineness.

V.24 - "did give" - Roth. "presented". RSV. "gave".

V.25 - "strangers" - GEYR - a guest, by implication a foreigner. Hezekiah's Passover incorporated Jews and Gentiles in a common faith and love of God. A type of Christ's work among Jew and Gentile.

"rejoiced" - SAMACH - to brighten up, be gleesome.

V.26 - "great joy" - Roth. "great rejoicing".

"the time of Solomon" - 175 years before. Solomon's great festivals early in his reign were again matched in spirit and fervour. It had been a long "drought".

V.27 - "to his holy dwelling place" - MA'ON - an abode. RSV. "holy habitation". This is the language of Solomon's day - 11 Chron.6:21,30,33,39; note context.

### THE PEOPLE DESTROY IDOLATRY 11 Chron 31:1

V.1 - "images" - MATSTSEBAH - a column, pillar. A special effort in Jerusalem resulted in a return to their home "ecclesias" with a new-found zeal.

"groves" - ASHERAH - happy (masc.). Where standards are relaxed and worship discouraged, immorality gains ground swiftly.

"high places" - Finally these were removed by the people themselves - the best way! Legislation of righteousness rarely lasts long.

"in Ephraim" - It seems likely that Israel was still in existence, therefore this task of removing idolatry would not be easy. It reveals the extent of their zeal as many would meet opposition in their home "ecclesias".

"until they had utterly destroyed" - Roth. "until they had made an end". The work was accomplished with the help of each other - co-operation between like-minded members of different ecclesias was the secret.

### THE TEMPLE SERVICES ARRANGED 11 Chron. 31:2-4

V.2 - "courses" - A return to David's arrangements 1 Chron.29:13,21.

"gates of the tents" - MACHANEH - An encampment hence an army (can be used of sacred courts). Roth. "camps".

V.3 - "set feasts" - Roth. "appointed feasts".

V.4 - "commanded" - AMAR - to say (used with great latitude). This is the word used throughout Hezekiah's life for "commanded". It differs from TSAVAH - to constitute, enjoin; and reveals the spirit of his reign - a call to co-operation through willingness, not commandment. Roth. "bade".

"that they might be encouraged" - CHAZAQ - to seize, to be strong. Roth.

"persevere". RSV. "give themselves". A principle expressed elsewhere, 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 Thess.5:12-13.

### THE PEOPLE'S OFFERINGS AND TITHES 11 Chron. 31:5-10

V.5 - "commandment" - DABAR - a word - confirms comment v4. Roth. "as soon as the thing spread abroad".

"children of Israel" - Note not "Judah" but "Israel" - reunification now, through Hezekiah's reformation.

"firstfruits" - RE'SHIYTH - the first (translated "principal thing"). The law of firstfruits - Exod.34:26; Deut.18:3-5 taught Israel that Yahweh required the first and best of their labours. The response of the people indicated they had been imbued with the spirit of the law. Note 4 special crops. The number 4 indicates "new creation".

V.6 - "children of Israel and Judah" - Differentiation but reveals that many of Israel had joined themselves to Judah.

"by heaps" - Roth. "did bring in and pile up heaps, heaps".

V.7 - "third month" - All events recorded thus far occurred within 3 months - well into harvest now.

"lay the foundation of the heaps" - Roth. "in the third month began they the heaps at the foundation and in the seventh they finished".

"seventh month" - End of harvest - the time of the feast of Tabernacles.



V.9 - "questioned" - DARASH - to seek or ask.

V.10 - "Azariah" - "Yah hath helped". May have been the same high-priest as 11 Chron.26:17 - 32 years before.

"house of Zadok" - Reflections of the Melchisedec priesthood.

"this great store" - Roth. "this great plenty". A lesson in the results of genuine zeal and sincerity coupled with determination to achieve results - Divine blessing to fruitfulness in order to produce more fruit.

### THE PRIESTHOOD ORGANISED 11 Chron. 31:11-19

V.11 - "commanded" - AMAR - to say. Roth. "gave the word".

"chambers" - LISHKAH - room of a building.

V.12 - "faithfully" - EMUNAH - literally firmness; figuratively, security. The counsel of Hezekiah was to store excess for later needs - a spiritual lesson, 1 Tim.6:19.

"Cononiah" - "Yah has sustained".

"ruler" - NAGID - a commander (as occupying the front).

"Shimei" - "famous".

V.13 - "Jehiel" - "God will live", 29:14. "Azaziah" - "Yah has strengthened".

"Jerimoth" - "elevations".

"Nahath" - "quiet".

"Asahel" - "God has made".

"Jozabad" - "Yahweh - endowed".

"Eliel" - "God of (his) God".

"Ismachiah" - "Yah will sustain".

"Mahath" - "erasure", 29:12.

"Benaiah" - "Yah has built".

"overseers" - PAQIYD - a superintendent.

"under the hand" - Roth. "at the direction of".

"commandment" - Roth. "by the appointment".

V.14 - "Kore" - "crier".

"Imnah" - "prosperity", (as betokened by the right hand).

V.15 - "next him" - Roth. "under his direction".

"Eden" - "pleasure". 29:12.

"Miniamin" - "from the right hand".

"Jeshua" - "He will save".

"Shemaiah" - "Yah has heard" 29:14.

"Amariah" - "Yah has said".

"Shecaniah" - "Yah has dwelt".

"set office" - EMUNAH - literally firmness, figuratively security. RSV.

"were faithfully assisting". Roth. "in trust". See verse 12.

V.16 - "genealogy" - YACHAS - a pedigree or family list. Roth. "besides registering them by males".

"charges" - MISHMERETH - watch, ie. the sentry. Roth. "watches".

V.18 - "sanctified themselves" - RSV. "for they were faithful in keeping themselves holy".

V.19 - "reckoned" - YACHAS - from the root to sprout, to enrol by pedigree.

### HEZEKIAH'S ZEAL AND SINCERITY 11 Chron. 31:20-21

V.20 - "right" - YASHAR - straight.

"truth" - EMETH - stability, certainty, trustworthiness. A comprehensive word describing a divine characteristic, Exod.34:6.

## THE SEIGE OF JERUSALEM - FROM SENNACHERIB'S CYLINDER

Recording his campaigns - now in the British Museum

In my third campaign I marched against Hatti. The awful splendour of my lordship overwhelmed Luli, king of Sidon, and he fled far off over the sea and died (an infamous death). The fearsome nature of the weapon of the god Ashur, my lord, overwhelmed Great Sidon, Little Sidon, Bit-Zitti, Zariptu, Mahalliba, Ushu, Akzib (and) Akku, his strong walled cities, places where there were food and drinking facilities for his garrisons, and they bowed in submission at my feet. Tuba'alu (Ethba'al) I sat on the throne to be the king and imposed upon him tribute, due to my lordship, (to be rendered) annually without ceasing.

In the course of my campaign, I surrounded, captured and carried off the spoil of Beth-Dagon, Joppa, Banaiabarqa, Asuru, cities belonging to Sidqa, who did not bow in submission at my feet quickly. The officials, nobles and people of Ekron, who had thrown Padi, their king, into iron fetters as one loyal to the treaty obligations of (imposed on him by) Assyria, had given him up to Hezekiah, the Jew, as an enemy. On account of the offence they had committed, their heart took fright and they implored (help from) the kings of Egypt, (and) bowmen, chariots of the kings of Ethiopia (Meluhha), and innumerable host, and, indeed, they came to help them. In the plain of Eltekeh, their battle array being drawn up over against me, they prepared their weapons. On (the oracular promise of) the help of Ashur, my lord, I clashed and effected their defeat. Amid the battle, my own hands captured alive the Egyptian charioteers and princes, together with charioteers belonging to the Ethiopian king. I beseiged and captured the town of Eltekeh and Timnah and carried off spoil from them. I drew near to Ekron and slew the officials and nobles who had committed the crime and hung their bodies on posts around the city. I counted as prisoners of war the citizens who had done hostile and abusive things. I ordered the release of the rest of them, who were not convicted of any crime or misbehaviour, against whom there was no charge. I caused Padi, their king to come out of Jerusalem and sat him on the throne as lord over them, fixing upon him (the payment of) tribute to my lordship.

But as for Hezekiah, the Jew, who did not bow in submission to my yoke, forty-six of his strong walled towns and innumerable smaller villages in their neighbourhood I beseiged and conquered by stamping down earth-ramps and then by bringing up battering rams, by the assault of foot-soldiers, by breaches, tunnelling and sapper operations. I made to come out from them 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, innumerable horses, mules, donkeys, camels, large and small cattle, and counted them as the spoils of war. He himself I shut up like a caged bird within Jerusalem, his royal city. I put watch-posts strictly around it and turned back to his disaster any who went out of its city gate. His towns which I had despoiled I cut off from his land, giving them to Mitinti, king of Ashdod, Padi, king of Ekron, and Sillibel, king of Gaza, and so reduced his land. Moreover, I fixed upon him an increase in the amount to be given as katre-presents for my lordship, in addition to the former tribute, to be given annually. As for Hezekiah, the awful splendour of my lordship overwhelmed him, and the irregular and regular troops which he had brought in to strengthen Jerusalem, his royal city, and had

obtained for his protection, together with 30 talents of gold, 300 talents of silver, precious stones, antimony, large blocks of red stone, ivory (inlaid) couches, ivory arm-chairs, elephant hide, elephant tusks, ebony-wood, box-wood, all kinds of valuable treasures, as well as his daughters, concubines, male and female musicians he sent me later to Nineveh, my lordly city. He sent a personal messenger to deliver the tribute and make a slavish obeisance.

(British Museum No. 91032)

Taken from the book "Documents from Old Testament Times".

### SENNACHERIB'S GLORY AND DEATH

"Sennacherib was the eldest son of Sargon, and succeeded his father in the summer of B.C.705. Born in the purple, and bred up as crown prince, his primary characteristic was an overweening pride and arrogance which shows itself in all his inscriptions. He calls himself 'the great king, the powerful king, the king of the Assyrians, of the nations, of the four regions, the diligent ruler, the favourite of the great gods, the observer of sworn faith, the guardian of law, the establisher of monuments, the noble hero, the strong warrior, the first of kings, the punisher of unbelievers, the destroyer of wicked men'.

He was mighty both in war and in peace. His warlike glories are attested by Herodotus, by other historians, and by his own annals. His peaceful triumphs are witnessed to by the great palace which he erected at Nineveh, and the magnificent series of sculptured slabs with which he adorned it, by his canals and aqueducts, his gate-towers and embankments his Bavian sculpture and his stele at the Nahr-el-kelb. He was a worthy successor of his father Sargon, and of the second Tiglathpileser, active in his military enterprises, indefatigable, persevering, full of resource. No more energetic soldier ever found himself at the head of a huge army eager for battle; no more vigorous administrator ever commanded the resources of a vast empire."

So writes the historian Rawlinson, of Sennacherib.

He was the Gogue of the ancient world!

The Babylonish inscriptions record the death of Sennacherib:

"On the 20th of the month Tebet, his son killed Sennacherib, king of Assyria, during a rebellion. For 23 years Sennacherib had exercised kingship over Assyria. The rebellion continued from the 20th Tebet to the 2nd month of Adar. On the 18th month of Adar, Esarhaddon, his son, sat on the throne in Assyria."



The Bow Used in Battle Between Assyrians and Their Foes



Assyrian King Piercing the Eyes of Captives

V.21 - "every work" - His approach to work in the Truth was not half-hearted but determined and resolute. He believed in the maxim that if something was worth doing it was worth doing well.

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

"all his heart" - A living example of Deut.6:4-5.

"prospered" - TSALEACH - to push forward.

#### 4th to 6th YEARS - THE CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL 11 Kings 18:9-12

V.9 - "fourth year" - 725 BC - Assyria invades Israel and the 2½ year siege of Samaria begins.

"Shalmaneser" - "The God Shulman is chief". The successor of Tiglathpileser 111 - he was Shalmaneser v and reigned from 727 - 722 BC.

V.10 - "three years" - I.e. nearly 3 years - late 725 to early 722.

V.11 - "Halah" - A district in Assyria on the banks of the river Khabour.

"Gozan" - "a quarry". A province of Assyria.

#### SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH 11 Kings 18:13-16

V.13 - "fourteenth year" - Hezekiah was 39. This was also the year of his sickness, see 11 Kings 20:1; 11 Chron.32:24; Isa.38:1 - cp. 11 Kings 20:6 and 18:2.

"Sennacherib" - "Sin (ie. the moon God) has multiplied the brothers". Son of Sargon who ascended the throne on the 12th of Ab (July or August) 705 BC. (?).

"fenced cities" - 46 cities in all, Isa36:1.

V.14 - "Lachish" - A royal Canaanite city - one of the chief fortresses of Judah, 30 miles sw. of Jerusalem, 15 miles west of Hebron. Had a double wall and triple gate and was of immense strategic importance.

"I have offended" - RSV. "I have done wrong, withdraw from me". Roth. "I have sinned".

"three hundred talents of silver" - Equivalent of \$450,000.

"thirty talents of gold" - Equivalent of \$900,000.

V.15 - Hezekiah forced into capitulation now depletes the temple he had spent so much time preparing and re-establishing.

V.16 - "cut off the gold from the doors" - In his extremity he was forced into unacceptable things such as Ahaz had indulged in for other reasons - 11 Chron.28:24. This was somewhat of a reversal of his early work, but he soon realised the folly of trying to bribe Sennacherib - Yahweh was the only one who could be trusted.

#### HEZEKIAH'S PREPARATION OF DEFENCES & PEOPLE 11 Chron. 32:1-8

V.1 - "establishment" - EMETH - stability (31:20). Roth. "After these things done in faithfulness". (RSV. supports this translation).

"thought to win them" - Roth. "and thought to break into them".

V.2 - "he was purposed" - Roth. "that his face was to war".

V.3 - "princes and his mighty men" - Roth. "captains and his heroes".

"stop the waters of the fountains" - Chiefly the virgin's fountain which he

Hezekiah of Judah

had channelled by means of a conduit beneath the wall and into the pool of Siloam and then concealed it from view, 11 Kings 20:20; Isa.7:3.

V.4 - "gathered much people" - There were however some faithless detractors, Isa.22:15-19 and some who relied upon Egypt, Isa.20:2-6,22:1-7 and some who rested upon their own strength, Isa.22:8-14.

"brook that ran" - Roth. "and the torrent that flowed", probably refers to the brook Kedron.

V.5 - "strengthened" - CHAZAQ - to seize, be strong. RSV. "he set to the work resolutely".

"raised up to the towers" - Roth. "and carried up thereon towers". RSV. "raised towers upon it".

"repaired Millo" - CHAZAQ - to be strong. Millo was the bulwark between the Temple and the kings palace, 1 Kings 11:27.

"darts" - SHELACH - a missile of attack, ie, a spear.

V.6 - "street" - Roth. "broadway".

"spake comfortably" - AL LEBAB - upon the heart. Roth. "spake unto their heart". RSV. "spoke encouragingly".

V.7 - "strong" - CHAZAQ - to seize, to be strong.

"courageous" - AMATS - to be alert. Roth. "bold".

"dismayed" - CHATHATH - to prostrate, hence break down.

"for there be more with us" - RSV. "for there is one greater with us than with him". (Roth. the same). Isa.7:8-9. Cp. Elisha's words, 11 Kings 6:16.

V.8 - "arm of flesh" - Jer.17:5; Job 40:9. Hezekiah's trust in Yahweh and distrust of the flesh was unsurpassed.

"fight our battles" - Cp. 11Chron.20:15; Deut.20:1-4.

"rested" - CAMAK - to prop, to lean upon or take hold. Roth. "and the people leaned upon the words....."

RABSHAKEH'S ULTIMATUM 11 Kings 18:17-37

V.17 - "Rab-saris" - "chief chamberlain". Ie. senior military officer.

"Rabshakeh" - "chief butler".

"Tartan" - the commander in chief of the army, Isa.20:1.

"Lachish" - The headquarters of Sennacherib's campaign.

"great host" - KABED - heavy (hence numerous). Roth. "heavy force".

"by the conduit" - A significant place, see the context of Isa.7, and Isaiah's message to Ahaz in this place. The virgin's fountain had been concealed and little did Rabshakeh know that the waters of Shiloah ran softly beneath their feet sustaining the city.

V.18 - "Eliakim" - "God of raising". Ges. "Whom God has set". A faithful man in contrast to Shebna. Chosen as a type of Christ in Isa.22:20-25.

"Hilkiah" - "portion of Yah".

"Shebna" - "to grow". He evidently held a higher position than Eliakim for he was to be replaced by him, Isa.22:15-19. He was a faithless man who weakened the resolve of the people.

"scribe" - CAPHAR - to score, ie. inscribe.

"Joah" - "Yahweh - brothered".

"Asaph" - "collector".

"recorder" - ZAKAR - to mark ie. to remember.

- V.19 - "What confidence" - BITTACHOWN - trust, from the root hasten for refuge. "trustest" - BATACH - to hasten to refuge (root of above).
- V.20 - "Thou sayest" - Roth. "Thou hast said - they are only words of the lips! - counsel and might have I for war".  
 "counsel" - ETSAH - advice by implication a plan.  
 "strength" - GEBUWRAH - force.
- V.21 - "thou trustest" - Roth. "Now lo! thou dost trust thyself on the support of this bruised cane".  
 "bruised" - RATSATS - to crack.  
 "reed" - QANEH - a reed, rod, shaft, tube, stem, etc. Rabshakeh charges Hezekiah with his father's faithlessness.  
 "it will go into his hand" - Roth. "it will enter his hand and lay it open".
- V.22 - "high places and altars" - They were Ahaz's work. Ahaz in Assyria's eyes was the rule by which Hezekiah was to be measured - apostasy was so widespread and common in Judah that it became accepted as normal. The world cannot understand the demands of the Truth, Hezekiah and those like him must stand alone.
- V.23 - "pledges" - ARAB - to braid, ie inter-mix, to give security. RSV. "Come now make a wager with my master". The offer of 2,000 horses and the sarcastic jibe about finding sufficient men to ride them are part of Rabshakeh's scheme to break Hezekiah and the people down by psychological means and weaken their resolve to trust in Yahweh.
- V.24 - "captain" - PASHA - prefect (a minor official).  
 "and put thy trust" - Roth. "or hast thou on thy part trusted to Egypt for chariots" - but Hezekiah was not like Ahaz.
- V.25 - "without Yahweh" - Roth. & RSV. "Now is it without Yahweh?"  
 "Yahweh said to me" - This was a lie, but Isaiah's prophecy had been made, Isa.8:6-8.
- V.26 - "Syrian language" - This reaction reveals that Rabshakeh's words had the desired effect on Hezekiah's men - they were afraid. They dreaded the effect upon the people overhearing from the wall.
- V.29 - "deceive" - NASHA - to lead astray, ie to delude. The aim of Rabshakeh is to divide Hezekiah from his people.
- V.31 - "make an agreement" - RSV. "make your peace with me". Roth. "deal with me thankfully" (Mg. "get a blessing out of my coming").  
 "of his own vine" - This is a cunning quotation of Mic.4:4 prophesied by Micah only a few years earlier. He presented himself as the one who would fulfil this prophecy.  
 "cistern" - BOWR - (bore) - pit, hole.
- V.32 - Another cunning ploy based upon Deut.8:7-8 (note 6 (flesh) things mentioned).  
 "persuadeth" - CUWTH - to prick, by implication to seduce.
- V.34 - The peoples mentioned were transported to Samaria by Shalmaneser but even they admitted the impotency of their gods, 11 Kings 17:24-26.

V.36 - "held their peace" - RSV. "were silent". This was a real test of faith for them.

V.37 - "clothes rent" - A sign of grief and distress.

### MESSENGERS SENT TO ISAIAH 11 Kings 19:1-5

V.1 - "sackcloth" - SAQ - a mesh, ie coarse loose cloth or sacking.

V.2 - "Eliakim" - Ges. "whom God has set". "Shebna" - "to grow".  
 "Isaiah" - "Yah is salvation". "Amoz" - "strong".

V.3 - "trouble" - TSARAH - tightness (ie. fig. trouble).

"rebuke" - TOWKACHATH - chastisement, refutation.

"blasphemy" - NEATSAH - scorn.

"children are come to the birth" - Ie. at a critical time when strength was needed it had been expended, Isa.26:17-18, 66:9.

V.4 - "reproach" - CHARAPH - fig, to carp at, ie defame.

"living God" - A testimony to Hezekiah's faith and conviction.

"reprove" - YAKACH - to correct, to argue, convict.

### ISAIAH'S ENCOURAGING REPLY 11 Kings 19:6-7

V.6 - "blasphemed" - GADAPH - to hack (with words) ie. revile.

V.7 - "a blast" - RUACH - wind. Roth. "Behold me! About to let go against him a blast".

"rumour" - SHEMUWAH - something heard, an announcement.

"I will cause" - There was to be Divine providential intervention.

### SENNACHERIB'S BLASPHEMOUS LETTER 11 Kings 19:8-13

V.8 - "Libnah" - "whiteness", some sort of whitish tree. A city near Lachish in southern Judah - strongly fortified.

V.9 - "Tirhakah" - The son of Shabaka an Ethiopian who was ruling Egypt at the time. Tirhakah was his supreme commander.

"Behold he is come" - This was probably the 'rumour' of v7.

V.10 - "deceive" - NASHA - to lead astray, ie. to delude. For this blasphemy he paid dearly and poetically v37.

V.12 & 13 - Reveals that this was a rehearsed and common approach, cp. Rabshakeh's words in 11 Kings 18:33-34.

### HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE 11 Kings 19:14-19

V.14 - "went up into" - RSV. & Roth. "went up to the house".

"spread it before Yahweh" - PARAS - to break apart, disperse. RSV. & Roth.

"spread" ie. lay before.

V.15 - "dwellet" - YASHAB - to sit, implies to dwell, remain.

"between the cherubims" - Roth. "inhabiting the cherubim". RSV. "who art

enthroned above the cherubim". Contrast Hezekiah's faith in God's existence with Ahaz's disbelief. This is a classic prayer, note praise to Yahweh first. Cp. Matt.6:9-10.

V.16 - "bow down" - NATAH - to stretch, by implication to band. Used throughout the Psalms of the cries of the faithful desiring to be heard, Psalms 17:6, 31:2, 45:10, 71:2, 86:1, 88:2, 102:2.

"open" - Not that Yahweh needs to be reminded but he desires his servants to approach him in this attitude - it is glorifying to him, Psalm 50:15.

V.17 - "destroyed" - Roth. "devoted to destruction".

V.19 - "thou only" - This was the issue. It was a challenge of Yahweh's existence - the gods of other nations were no gods. Yahweh could not refuse Hezekiah his request but in saving him he demonstrated his methods by placing him under extreme pressure and at last helping him, thus testing Hezekiah to the full.

### ISAIAH'S PROPHECY AGAINST ASSYRIA 11 Kings 19:20-34

V.20 - "I have heard" - I.e. Yahweh would answer favourably - Hezekiah was to hear these words again, 11 Kings 20:5.

V.21 - "the virgin daughter of Zion" - Used by the prophets to describe Judah (and Israel). Jer.14:17, 18:13, 31:4. See Micah's prophecy at the same time - Mic.4:8-10, 5:1-3.

"despised" - BAZAH - disesteem. Roth. "mocketh".

"shaken her head" - Roth. & RSV. "wags her head". A gesture of contempt and derision, Psalm 22:7; Job 16:4.

V.22 - "reproached" - CHARAPH - to expose, to defame. RSV. "mocked".

"blasphemed" - GADAPH - to hack with words, i.e. revile.

"exalted thy voice" - RUWM - to be high, to rise or raise. RSV. "raised". Roth. "lifted high".

"lifted up thine eyes on high" - Roth. "hast proudly raised thine eyes". RSV. "haughtily lifted your eyes".

V.23 - "sides" - RSV. "far recesses". Roth. "recesses".

"the tall cedars" - RSV. "I felled its tallest cedars".

"choice fir trees" - RSV. "its choicest cypresses". Symbols of kings and powers overcome by Assyria.

"I will enter" - Roth. "and have entered". (RSV. supports this).

"lodgings of his borders" - "lodgings" is MALOWN - a lodgement, encampment.

"borders" is QETS - an extremity. RSV. "farthest retreat".

"the forest of his Carmel" - RSV. "its densest forest". Roth. "its thick garden forests".

V.24 - "strange" - RSV. & Roth. "foreign".

"beseiged places" - MATSOWR - hemming in (i.e. limiting).

V.25 - "Hast thou not heard" - Yahweh now turns to rebuke Assyria. Roth.

"Hast thou not heard - that long ago that is what I appointed". RSV. "that I determined it long ago".



Hezekiah of Judah

V.25 - "of ancient times that I have formed it" - "formed" is YATSAR - to press hence to mould in a form (squeeze into shape). Roth. "devised". RSV. "I planned from days of old". Yahweh had a purpose for Assyria from the beginning.

V.26 - "of small power" - Heb. short of hand.  
"blasted" - Roth. "withered". RSV. "blighted".

V.27 - "abode" - YASHAB - to sit by implication to dwell, remain.  
"rage" - RAGAZ - to quiver (with violent emotion).

V.28 - "tumult" - SHA'ANAN - secure (bad sense - haughty). RSV. "arrogance".  
 Roth. "thy contempt".

"hook in the nose" - This is the language of Ezek.38:4, which speaks of the latter day Assyrian. There is evidence that Sennacherib left Lachish v8 and went into Egypt then returned - his army was destroyed outside Jerusalem (the type of Russia in the latter days). The practice of putting hooks in captives jaws or nose was of Assyrian origin.

"bridle" - Roth. & RSV. "bit". (an eastern method of controlling camels).

V.29 - "a sign" - OUTH - a signal (as a flag, beacon etc). This sign now given to Hezekiah as an assurance.

"grow of themselves" - Ie. unsown crops such as vines, olives, a species of corn etc. Lev.25:5.

"plant vineyards" - Negates Rabshakeh's threat, 11 Kings 18:31-32.

V.30 - "remnant that is escaped" - RSV. "surviving remnant". Refer to Isaiah's prophecy and Shear-Jashub, Isa.7:3.

"take root downward" - See the symbol of the vine, Psa.80, especially v9 and note the context of v1. See also Isa.27:6; Rev.22:16.

V.31 - "they that escape" - RSV. "And out of Mt. Zion a band of survivors".

"the zeal of Yahweh of hosts" - QINAH - jealousy or envy, from the root to be zealous. A phrase characteristic of Isaiah found in Emmanuel prophecies, Isa. 9:7.

V.32 - "cast a bank" - RSV. "cast up a siege mound".

V.34 - "defend" - GANAN - to hedge about ie. protect, 11 Kings 20:6.

"for mine own sake" - Cp. v16-19, this was the reason for deliverance.

"for my servants David's sake" - Ie. his covenants to David. See also connection with Ezek.37:24-25.

HEZEKIAH'S SICKNESS UNTO DEATH 11 Kings 20:1-7

V.1 - "In those days" - Ie. before the destruction of the Assyrian army. Cp. 11 Kings 20:6 with 19:34. It appears that he was struck down during the siege in the midst of his troubles with Sennacherib.

"set thine house in order" - This highlighted to Hezekiah an area of neglect - it is apparent that to this stage he had no children, cp. 11 Kings 20:6 with 21:1. The need for a son to continue the Davidic line appears to be the background to Psa.127 which is among the Songs of Degrees assembled by Hezekiah, Psa.120 - 134.

"not live" - RSV. & Roth. "not recover". The disease is not named but v7 gives a clue.

V.2 - "turned his face to the wall" - With singular purpose - no hypocrisy or forethought but the immediate and spontaneous response of a genuine heart in tune with God.

V.3 - "I beseech Thee" - AHN-NAH - Literally "Oh, now". Always used as a cry of anguish from men in distress. Occurs 13 times, Exod.32:31; Neh.1:5&11; Psa.116:4&16; 118:25; Dan.9:4; John 1:14,42.

"remember" - Like Nehemiah he had done things which he knew pleased Yahweh, Neh.5:19.

"in Truth" - EMETH - stability, figuratively certainty, trustworthiness. The Divine characteristic of justice but used in the sense of uprightness and integrity.

"perfect heart" - SHALEM - complete from the root to be safe. Hezekiah is the only king who said this of himself without fear of contradiction for he knew he had served Yahweh with all his heart.

"wept sore" - GADOL - great. RSV. "bitterly". Roth. "wept aloud". (Roth. mg. "wept with a great weeping").

V.4 - "middle court" - Roth. (mg) "written city , read court". In some codex both written and read city". Gray comments - it was the court between the temple and the palace.

V.5 - "turn again" - RSV. "turn back". Roth. "return".

"captain" - NAGID - a commander. RSV. "prince".

"third day" - A typical resurrection on the third day.

V.7 - "lump of figs" - DEBELAH - to press together, ie. a cake of pressed figs. Roth. & RSV. "a cake of figs". Secular history attests to the use of figs to draw ulcers. (Pliny).

"boil" - SHECHIYN - to burn, inflammation, ie. an ulcer. Boils can be of different kinds. In Job's case masses of boils erupted Job 2:7, with an angry inflammation surrounding gangrenous skin - an open oozing sore. However in Hezekiah's case there appears to have been only one boil, probably a carbuncle. A very large boil with a number of openings with large amounts of dead tissue and discharge which being septic led to blood poisoning, etc. There seems to be little support for the theory that the disease was elaphantiasis - only one ancient version translates Job 2:7 that way. The same word is used in relation to leprosy in Lev.13 and Hezekiah's sickness was doubtless a form of leprosy.

### THE SIGN OF HIS HEALING 11 Kings 20:8-11

V.8 - "sign" - contrast Ahaz who being offered a sign, refused it. Another example of a faithful man seeking assurance, cp. Judges 6:36-40.

V.9 - "degrees" - MAALAH - elevation (lit. a step or grade mark). See the 15 Songs of Degrees Psa.120-134 compiled by Hezekiah apparently one for each year of his extension of life.

V.10 - "light thing" - RSV. "easy thing".

"go down" - RSV. "to lengthen". Roth. "decline".

V.11 - "dial" - MAALAH - same word as "degrees" v9.

"of Ahaz" - That he should be connected is noteworthy for Hezekiah is being revealed as his exact opposite. Isaiah had offered Ahaz a sign in the "heights"

HIS RECOVERY AND PSALM OF PRAISE Isa. 38:9-22

Hezekiah is portrayed as the suffering servant of Yahweh - raised after 3 days - marries Hephzibah "my delight is in her" and bears the seed "to declare his generation". Compare this Psalm with the language of Isa.53.

V.10 - "cutting off" - RSV. & Roth. "noontide". This Psalm reveals Hezekiah's thoughts during the sickness.

V.11 - "land of the living" - Cp. Isa.53:8.

V.12 - "age" - DOR - a revolution of time, ie. an age or generation. Also a dwelling. RSV. "my dwelling is plucked up and removed from me".  
 "shepherds tent" - ie. something easily dismantled, hence disappears quickly.  
"with pining sickness" - Roth. & RSV. "from the loom doth he cut me off".

V.13 - "I reckoned" - RSV. "I cry for help until morning".

V.14 - "undertake" -RSV. "be thou my security".

V.15 - "I shall go softly" - RSV. "All my sleep has fled because of the bitterness of my soul".

V.17 - "for peace" - Roth. "Lo for well being I had bitterness", cp. Isa.53:5.  
 "thou hast in love" - "but thou hast held back my life".  
"sins" - Cp. Isa.53:6.

V.19 - "the father to the children" - But he had no children, cp. Isa.53:8&10.

V.21 - "plaister" - MARACH - to soften by rubbing or pressure, hence to apply as an emollient.

THE OVERTHROW OF SENNACHERIB'S ARMY 11 Kings 19:35-37

V.35 - "that night" - Sennacherib's army had returned to lay seige against Jerusalem but before preparations were made disaster struck the Assyrians on the first night!

"when they" - Roth. "when men arose". (RSV.)

V.37 - "Adrammelech" - "splendour of the king".

"smote him with the sword" - Fulfilment of 11 Kings 19:7.

"Armenia" - Roth. "Ararat".

"Esarhaddon" - "Ashur has given a brother". Reigned from 680 - 669BC.  
 Sennacherib's favourite son and his army commander.

SENNACHERIB'S ASSASSINATION & HEZEKIAH'S SUCCESS 11 Chron.32:21-23

V.22 - "guided" - NAHAL - to run with a sparkle, ie. flow. Hence to conduct by inference to protect, sustain.

V.23 - "gifts" - MINCHAH - to apportion, ie. bestow, tribute.

"presents" - MIGDANAH - preciousness, ie. a gem.

"magnified" - NACAH - to lift. Roth. "exalted". (RSV.)

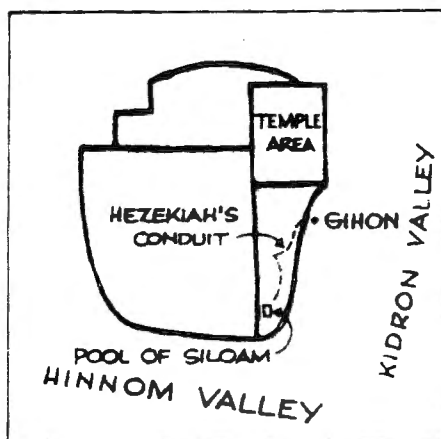
## HEZEKIAH'S CONDUIT

### His Preparations for the Defence of the City

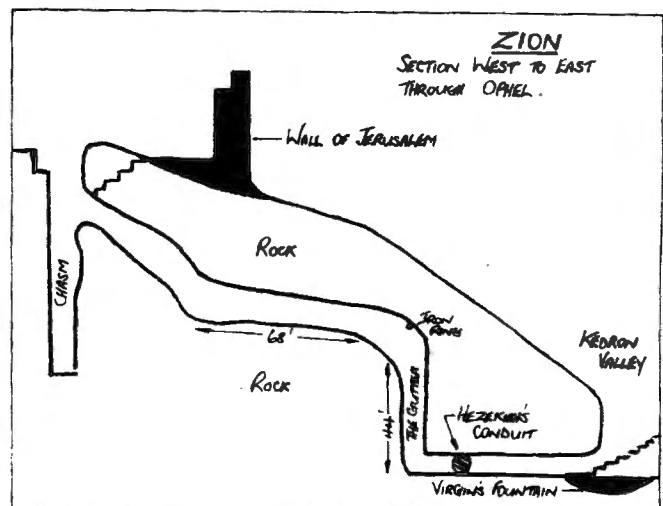
Hezekiah's aqueduct is one of the archaeological mysteries of the city of Jerusalem. It was laborously dug out of rock, and follows an "S" shape for 1,700 feet, linking the spring of Gihon with the Pool of Siloam (2 Chron.32:3-4) which was then surrounded by a wall so closing it off from outside contact (Isa.22:9-11 - the word "ditch" signifies "reservoir"). Why this aqueduct followed the "S" shape is not known, for if it travelled in a straight line, some 700 feet of difficult digging would have been avoided. The record says that "many people were gathered together" for the purpose of digging (2 Chron.32:4). Perhaps in the panic and confusion mistakes were made and thus the curious shape of the aqueduct came into being. The construction of the aqueduct was apparently mooted when the Assyrians marched south and fear dominated Jerusalem (Isa.22:9-11), but only constructed or completed when it was obvious that Sennacherib was going to attack Jerusalem (2 Chron.32:1). The aqueduct stopped the water of Jerusalem from flowing into the Kidron Valley, and therefore being available to any invading enemy.

The story of the digging is told on an inscription in stone found on the spot of the aqueduct in 1880 and today exhibited in Istanbul Museum, it makes interesting reading:-

"The boring through is completed. And this is the story of the boring; while yet they plied the pick, each towards his fellow, and while yet there were three cubits to be bored through, there was heard the voice of one calling to the other that there was a hole in the rock on the right hand and on the left hand. And on the day of the boring through the workers in the tunnel struck each to meet his fellow, pick upon pick. Then the water poured from the source to the pool 1,200 cubits, and a hundred cubits was the height of the rock above the heads of the workers in the tunnel."



Jerusalem at the Time of Hezekiah  
ca. 700 B. C. . Showing Hezekiah's Conduit  
(Siloam Tunnel)



## THE SONGS OF DEGREES

The Songs of the Degrees are 15 in number (120-134). They are very suitable to the circumstances of Hezekiah's life, and it is suggested that they were arranged by him, 10 of them having been actually written by him. Dr. J.W. Thirtle and the Companion Bible is of interest:-

"They (the Songs of the Degrees) correspond in number with the 15 years added to Hezekiah's life. Ten are by Hezekiah (corresponding with the number of the "degrees" by which the shadow of the sun went backward on the sun-dial of Ahaz - 2 Kings 20:8-11). Five are by others (4 by David and 1 by Solomon). Solomon's Psalm occupies the centre (127); and, of the 7 on either side, 2 in each 7 are by David; and 5 in each 7 by Hezekiah. The 15 Psalms are arranged in 5 groups of 3 each. In each group, the subject of the first is Distress; the second is Trust in Yahweh; the third speaks of Blessing and Peace in Zion.

They are here in fulfilment of Hezekiah's promises recorded in Isa.38:20."

The Psalms are set out in five groups as follows:-

### Group 1 - Psalms 120 to 122

This group of psalms appears to have its basis in Sennacherib's seige of Jerusalem.

Psa. 120 - DISTRESS at Rabshakeh's blasphemous words

Psa. 121 - TRUST that Yahweh will save Jerusalem

Psa. 122 - DELIVERANCE and blessings for Jerusalem.

### Group 2 - Psalms 123 to 125

The basis of this group appears to be more particularly in the conference between Rabshakeh and the Jews at the time when he stood on the Virgin's fount (Isa.36:2).

Psa. 123 - DISTRESS at Rabshakeh's scorning words

Psa. 124 - TRUST in Yahweh to deliver from the spoiler

Psa. 125 - DELIVERANCE and peace in Zion.

### Group 3 - Psalms 126 to 128

This group could be based on Hezekiah's sorrow for Jerusalem at the time of the seige and his desire for an heir.

Psa. 126 - DISTRESS at the straitness of the siege.

Psa. 127 - TRUST that Yahweh would provide a heritage

Psa. 128 - DELIVERANCE and blessing as his prayer is heard.

### Group 4 - Psalms 129 to 131

This group appears to be based in the crisis that faced Hezekiah when Jerusalem was encircled with armies and Isiah came to him with the message telling him of his impending death.

Psa. 129 - DISTRESS at the impending crisis

Psa. 130 - TRUST that Yahweh would heal and redeem

Psa. 131 - DELIVERANCE and hope in Yahweh.

### Group 5 - Psalms 132 to 134

The basis of this group appears to be Hezekiah's concern for the Temple, its restoration, and future glory, together with true worshippers.

Psa. 132 - DISTRESS for fulfilment of the Davidic promise

Psa. 133 - TRUST that true unity will one day be revealed

Psa. 134 - DELIVERANCE and blessing out of Zion.

HEZEKIAH'S PRIDE AFTER HEALING 11 Chron. 32:24-26

V.25 - "rendered not again" - SHUWB - to turn back. RSV. "did not make return".

"benefit" - GEMUWL - treatment ie an act.

"lifted up" - GABAHH - to soar, ie. be lofty. The effect of Divine blessing and subsequent notoriety and prosperity was to temporarily puff up his heart with an unwarranted sense of importance.

V.26 - "humbled" - KANA - to bend the knee, hence humiliate.

"pride" - GOBAHH - elation, grandeur, arrogance.

"wrath of Yahweh" - The wrath of v25 did not come in Hezekiah's lifetime, but was held in reserve.

HEZEKIAH'S RICHES AND PROSPERITY 11 Chron. 32:27-30

V.27 - "riches and honour" - Reminiscent of Jehoshaphat 11 Chron.18:1. who also stumbled briefly through pride and self reliance.

"pleasant jewels" - RSV. "for all kinds of costly vessels".

V.28 - "stalls" - URVAH - a herding place.

"cotes" - AVERAH - a stall.

V.30 - "stopped" - SATHAM - to stop up.

"upper watercourse" - Roth. "upper spring of the waters".

"Gihon" - "stream". This was the Virgin's fountain of Isa.7:3 & 36:2. Before the Assyrian invasion Hezekiah sealed the spring and diverted its waters into the pool of Siloam by a tunnel running beneath the city wall.

"the west side" - RSV. "and directed them down to the west side".

"prospered" - TSALEACH - to push forward.

HEZEKIAH'S MISTAKE 11 Chron. 32:31

V.31 - "Howbeit" - KEN - set, rightly. Roth. "Yet verily".

"ambassadors" - LUWTS - to make mouths at, ie. to scoff, hence (from effort to pronounce a foreign language) to interpret, or intercede. RSV. "envoys".

"wonder" - MOPETH - a miracle, by implication a token or omen. Roth. "wonderful token" - a reference to the miracle of Ahaz's sun dial, v24. Probably Babylon the rising superpower was interested in the circumstances surrounding the defeat of the Assyrian army as well, and also Hezekiah's recent ascent to power and wealth.

"God left him" - RSV. "God left him to himself".

"to try him" - NACAH - to test.

"that he might know" - Roth. "to take note of all that was in his heart".

BABYLON'S DIPLOMATIC MISSION 11 Kings 20:12-13

V.12 - "Berodach - baladan" - A variation of Merodach-baladan. "Marduk has given a son", Isa.39:1. He was the king who welded the divisive Chaldean tribes together and conquered Babylonia holding it against Sargon in 721 BC. - was defeated by Sargon and fled, only to return later as king of Babylon in 702 BC. in the reign of Sennacherib who also subsequently defeated him. It seems Merodachbaladan's embassy was sent just after his return to power in an attempt to stir up revolt and gain assistance against Assyria in the west.

V.13 - "hearkened unto them" - SHAMA - to hear. RSV. "welcomed them".  
 "armour" - KELIY - apparatus (implement, utensil or weapon). RSV. "his  
 armoury". (Roth.)  
 "dominion" - RSV. "realm".

# ISAIAH REBUKES HEZEKIAH 11 Kings 20:14-19

V.15 - Even in error Hezekiah is absolutely honest - he does not attempt to cover his actions or hide his sins.

V.18 - "sons that shall issue" - Evidence that he was childless.  
 "they shall be eunuchs" - Fulfilled, Dan.1:3-7.

V.19 - "good is the word of Yahweh" - Characteristic of Hezekiah to accept without question or complaint the divine edict.  
 "is it not good" - RSV. "for he thought, why not, if there will be peace and security in my days". Roth. "is it not that peace and stability there shall be in my days". This is not selfishness but a confidence in God that he would be blessed for his trust in him. The wrath would come upon his posterity who would deserve it.

# HEZEKIAH'S DEATH AND BURIAL 11 Chron. 32:32-33

V.32 - "goodness" - CHESED - kindness, from the root to bow, ie. to be kind. Roth. "lovingkindnesses". RSV. "his good deeds". This completes Hezekiah's character - this is the other side of the divine character, see 11 Chron.31:20; 11 Kings 20:3.

V.33 - "chiefest" - MAALEH - an elevation, ie. acclivity or platform. RSV. "ascent of the tombs". (Roth) Same root word for "degrees", 11 Kings 20:9-10.  
 "did him honour" - KABOD - weight ie.splendour. Contrast Ahaz, 11 Chron.28:27.



Sennacherib on his throne before the gates of Lachish



Reconstruction of a fortified town: Lachish.

# MANASSEH - The Murderous Corruptor

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Causing to forget". (Root, NASHA - forget or neglect).

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 20:21

LAST MENTION - Jer.15:4

LENGTH OF REIGN - 55 years

From B.C. (695) 685-641

AGE AT ACCESSION - 12

DEATH - 67

FATHER - Hezekiah - "strengthened of Yah"

MOTHER - Hephzibah - "My delight is in her"

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - After repentance - 11 Kings 23:26, 24:3; Jer.15:4. Cp. the principle of Ezek.18:19-23 - Manasseh's personal position may have been secured but the effects of his sins upon Judah were irredeemable and brought about Judah's demise.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Manasseh the son of Hezekiah was without any doubt the worst king of Judah. The only mitigating factor was that near the end of his life he repented of his idolatry after a brief captivity in Babylon. By then however it was too late to reverse the effect of his idolatry and corruptions upon the ecclesia of God which went into captivity because "Yahweh turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal". (11 Kings 23:26). The effect of Manasseh's idolatry upon the people was utterly demoralising as the failure of Josiah's desperate reformation testifies. The greater part of Judah had become incorrigably established in immorality and devious superstitions and nothing could be done to salvage them from it.

Not only did Manasseh literally murder thousands of God's servants during his reign but he must also be held responsible for the eternal loss of many hundreds of thousands of lives as a result of his corrupting and defiling idolatries. A deliberate campaign of corruption and organised idolatry was commenced in Judah aimed at destroying every vestige of Hezekiah's reforms. Tragically this campaign was entirely successful and what resistance did remain to it was quickly eliminated by a brutal campaign of murder as all who stood for the principles espoused by Hezekiah were massacred until blood flowed in the streets of Jerusalem. Tradition holds that one of the victims of Manasseh was Isaiah the prophet who was "sawn asunder" after having taken refuge in a hollow tree trunk. The destruction of the prophets and Yahweh's servants signalled the end for Judah because the moral fibre of the ecclesia was gone and virtually nothing remained upon which a reformation could be based. The total demoralisation of the people and the complete absence of



righteousness outside of the palace and the temple is clear from the words of Yahweh through Jeremiah the prophet in the days of Josiah the reformer; "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgement, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it". Jer.5:1.

As Manasseh came to the throne at the age of twelve it must be assumed that the men who guided him in the early years of his reign were responsible for directing him along an evil path, but that Manasseh responded with alacrity to the influences brought upon him during the formative years is obvious. When he attained maturity he needed no guidance in undertaking his campaigns of corruption and murder which were only halted by divine intervention resulting in his incarceration in the dungeons of Babylon. It remains to be seen whether Manasseh's repentance was genuine and sustained to the end of his life. "The judge of all the earth" may well forgive Manasseh on the principle of Ezek.18:21-22, but he could not overlook the consequences of his corruptions.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF MANASSEH

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession at age 12	20:21	32:33
Divine estimation of his reign	21:1-2	33:1-2
His great idolatry and evil	21:3-9	33:3-9
Rejects the prophets of God		33:10
Prophets warn of impending doom	21:10-15	
Massacres God's prophets and the righteous	21:16	
Is carried captive into Babylon		33:11
Seeks Yahweh and is released		33:12-13
Fortifies the walls of Jerusalem		33:14
Removes idolatry and worships Yahweh		33:15-17
Death and final summary	21:17-18	33:18-20

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND CORRUPT IDOLATRIES 11 Kings 21:1-9

V.1 - "twelve years old" - Born 3 years after Hezekiah was granted extension of life by 15 years, 11 Kings 20:6. Hezekiah was in a period of spiritual lapse, 11 Kings 20:12-13, which resulted in Isaiah's prophecy of the impending overthrow of the kingdom, 11 Kings 20:16-18.

"Manasseh" - Heb. "causing to forget, from the root NASHA, to forget, to neglect. There is Egyptian influence in his name - Joseph named his son Manasseh (his wife was Egyptian). In Isa.28:7,14; 30:1-3 the prophet speaks of the priests who had gone into Egypt. These may have led the young king Manasseh into idolatry. Being only 12 he was unable to rule and therefore the leadership was committed either to the priests or the royal courtiers - hence the idolatry into which the nation fell.

"reigned fifty five years" - Longer than any king of Israel or Judah. He died at 67.

V.2 - "He did that which was evil" - The record of Manasseh's evil begins immediately - proof that he was guided by the priests, royal courtiers and false prophets at a very young age. He reintroduced the religious worship of the nations whom God had evicted from the land because of the self- same

thing. Manasseh was a young person who considered that worship was too "stuffy" and needed to be "spruced up" a bit.

V.3 - "he built up again" - The fact that he could do this shows that Hezekiah had left something upon which to rebuild. This would be the sense of 11 Kings 18:4 - "removed" in the Hebrew is SOOR - to turn off. He probably caused the operation of the high places to cease and desecrated them but not as thoroughly as Josiah did later in 11 Kings 23:13. The record speaks as though the high places built by Solomon still remained after 360 years and were left to Josiah to "defile" (Heb. TAME - to be foul). However thorough Hezekiah's purge might have been it was shortlived for Manasseh reconstructed the high places of Solomon.

"reared up altars" - The atrocities of Baal worship like that of Ahab and Jezebel were introduced, however worse than this was to follow.

"and made a grove" - Heb. ASHERAH - female Phoenician goddess related to Ashtaroth - the Phoenician goddess of love and increase. Baal and Asherah were worshipped in conjunction - male and female. For further information see footnote E, pg260 Rotherham. This worship being set up it was not long before the people had whole-heartedly joined in. Worship was sensual, women surrendered their virtue, sacred places were brothels, holy prostitutes (male and female) presided over 'worship' and were themselves initiated by impure rites.

"worshipped all the host of heaven" - This was a new type of worship adopted from the Assyrians or the Chaldeans - worship conducted on housetops. Star worship - superstitions from Babylon. Manasseh had built a place for this worship in an upper chamber over the doorway to one of the courts of the temple which had previously been erected by his grandfather and predecessors 11 Kings 23:12.

V.4 - "he built altars in the house of Yahweh" - Manasseh built additional altars "in the house of Yahweh". Probably means in the court as v5 - 1 Kings 14:21; Deut.12:11.

V.5 - "altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts" - The court of the priests and the outer court.

V.6 - "son" - Lxx and Chronicles have "sons" (plural). He followed in the footsteps of his grandfather Ahaz 1 Kings 16:3.

"observed times...." - Roth. "practised hidden arts and used divination". He appointed a necromancer or soothsayer, a wizard - Babylonish source. It was forbidden under the Law Lev.19:31; Deut.18:11. Manasseh despaired of help from Yahweh to loose him from the Assyrian yoke - hence the frantic worship of the host of heaven and the employment of a wizard may have been in a bid to gain assistance against Assyria.

V.7 - "he set up a graven image" - Roth. "he set the image of the sacred stem" - the Asherah. This was mounted in the house itself. Probably in the Holy Place between the lampstand and table of shewbread. Yahweh had chosen this house to put his name there, 1 Kings 8:29,44 & 9:3.

V.8 - The covenant made to David - the hope of the ecclesia had been forgotten 11 Sam.7:10. The foundation of life in the ecclesia - the Law - had been rejected.

V.9 - "hearkened" - SHAMA - to hear intelligently.  
"seduced" - TAAH - to vacillate, to reel or stray; translated as cause to go astray, deceive, make to stagger. Manasseh purposefully and wilfully organised idolatry to demoralise the people. Their sin became worse in Yahweh's eyes than the evil of the nations that had been evicted from the land by Joshua's campaigns.

### YAHWEH CONDEMNS MANASSEH'S IDOLATRY 11 Kings 21:10-16

V.10 - "prophets" - plural - many were sent to Manasseh, 11 Chron. 33:10&18. These were probably disciples of Isaiah who prophesied during Hezekiah's reign, Isa. 1:1. Habakkuk may have prophesied in this period - Hab. 1:5-6, note the similarity of words to 11 Kings 21:12.

V.11 - "Amorites" - The most powerful and perverse nation of Canaan whose iniquity had become full were outstripped by Manasseh, Gen. 15:16.

V.12 - "whosoever heareth of it" - Lit. "his hearers".  
"shall tingle" - i.e. it shall affect his ears like a sharp piercing sound - spoken of Eli's house, 1 Sam. 3:11. Jeremiah used the same expression in his denunciation of Manasseh's works, Jer. 19:3.

V.13 - "plummet" - MISHQOLETH - a level i.e. to be thrown down. Amos 7:7-9; Isa. 34:11; Lam. 2:8. The line of Samaria and plummet of Ahab indicate similarity of judgement pending on Judah as fell on Israel.

"wiping a dish" - Symbolic of the overthrow of the people.

"turning it upside down" - Symbolic of the overthrow of the city, removing every last drop - emphasised later by Ezekiel in Ezek. 21:27.

V.14 - Isaiah had prophesied this - these prophets may have been his scholars - now Yahweh spoke through them, Isa. 42:22.

V.15 - Yahweh's patience with his people manifested since the Exodus had reached its climax. Their apostasy was worse than the corruptions of the Amorites whom they evicted from the land.

V.16 - "shed innocent blood very much" - Manasseh was a man whose conscience was pricked by those who stood up for the truth and who plainly spoke forth - so he formulated a policy - kill those who speak truth and get rid of all access to the scriptures. A type of Christadelphians who decry Bible study because they have set up idols in their heart. Unable to defeat the prophets forthright stand for the truth he slew them with the sword (a type of the sword of his mouth). He systematically killed all the adherents of Hezekiah's reforms till the blood of the slain had filled Jerusalem - see the use of the same word 11 Kings 10:21. If Jerusalem was filled with blood then the murders must have been committed in one day. The voice of the prophets Vvs 10-15 probably provoked Manasseh to institute a massacre immediately. Jewish tradition holds that Isaiah was "sawn asunder" (Heb. 11:37) by Manasseh during this purge.

### MANASSEH HUMBLING IN BABYLON 11 Chron. 33:11-17

V.11 - "thorns" - hooks or rings passed through the nose of captives, Isa. 37:29. Yahweh by providence caused Manasseh to be carried to Babylon.

V.12-13 - "he besought Yahweh" - CHALAH - to entreat. Manasseh humbled himself greatly - providence acted again and he was released and returned to Jerusalem.

V.14 - "he built a wall" - He fortified the wall of Jerusalem and built another wall around the city. At the same time he improved the defences of all the cities of Judah.

V.15 - "he took away the strange gods" - Manasseh introduced a reformation by commanding the people to serve Yahweh and removing the Asherah from the temple and other idols and altars and rebuilding the altar of Burnt offering upon which he offered peace offerings and thank offerings (sin offering is conspicuous by its absence).

V.17 - "the people did sacrifice still in the high places" - The indifference of the people was revealed inasmuch as they still worshipped in the high places but outwardly in the name of Yahweh because of the king's commandment. Perhaps the omission of this record in Kings is evidence of its ineffectiveness in the sight of Yahweh. This was obviously late in Manasseh's life and the people waited for his death. When Amon came to the throne he restored all that his father had broken down because it was left to Josiah to remove them, 11 Kings 23:4-14.

#### DEATH AND BURIAL 11 Kings 21:17-18

V.18 - "garden of Uzza" - Meaning strength. Not the palace but another house which Manasseh had built.



The Egyptian God Amon

"and carried him to Babylon."

# AMON -

## The Reprobate

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "to train, to be skilled".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 21:18

LAST MENTION - Zeph.1:1

LENGTH OF REIGN - 2 years

From B.C.640-639.

AGE AT ACCESSION - 22

DEATH - 24

FATHER - Manasseh-"to cause to forget"

MOTHER - Meshullemeth-"to be friendly, reciprocate"

### SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The repentance of Manasseh near the end of his reign was too late to save Amon from an upbringing in the ways of the most corrupt idolatries. As a child he had known nothing else but the superstitions and immoralities practised by his father and the nation. Jerusalem was full of idols and the youthful Amon acquired a taste for the impure rites associated with pagan idolatry. This remained with him throughout his short reign until his death by assassination at the age of 24.

When the repentant Manasseh died, Amon acceded to the throne and immediately set about restoring the idolatry his father had removed. It may be assumed from the fact that Amon met death at the hands of his own palace courtiers who had also served his father, that he was a disagreeable individual who did not endear himself to his associates. It was as well that such an evil character was removed, before the child Josiah was adversely affected by his father's ways.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF AMON

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession aged 22	21:18	33:20
Divine estimation of his reign	21:19-22	33:21-23
Assassinated by his own servants	21:23	33:24
People of land kill his assassins	21:24	33:25
Final summary and burial	21:25-26	

### VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

#### ACCESSION AND EVIL REIGN 11 Kings 21:19-22

V.19 -"Amon" - Heb. to train, to be skilled. Egyptian influence in his name which is almost the same as the Egyptian sun god, "Amen", as Manasseh had adopted Egyptian superstition. He was skilled in his fathers ways 11 Chron. 33:23.

"twenty two years old" - Married at 16 - born when Manasseh was 45. He

would have been educated in his father's evil way. Manasseh's eventual repentance made no effect on the youth who had tasted the sensual pleasure of the worship of the Asherah.

"Meshullemeth" - Heb. to be friendly, reciprocate.

"Haruz" - Heb. earnest, determined.

"Jotbah" - Heb. goodness, pleasantness.

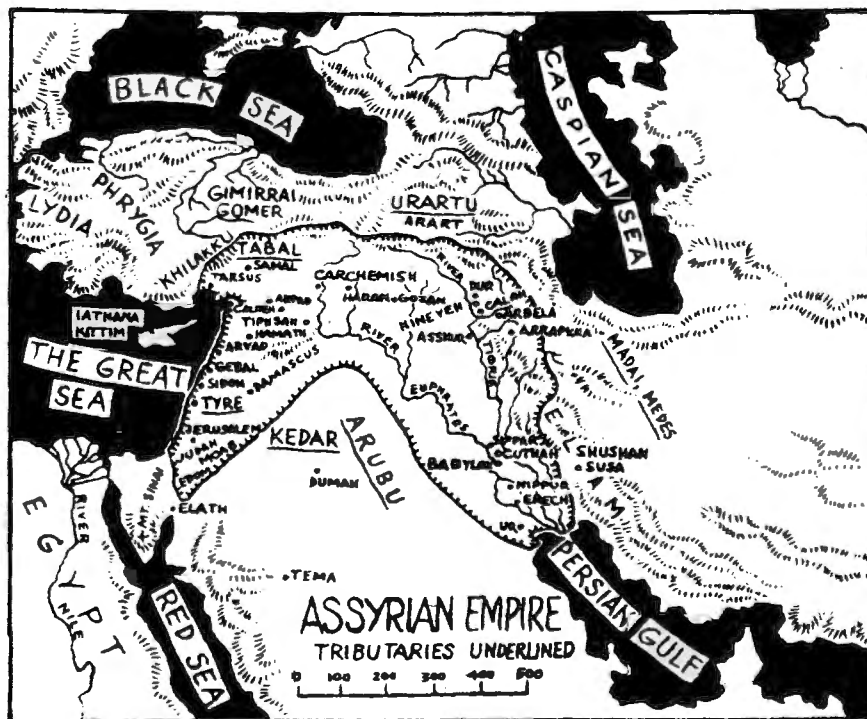
V.20 - He duplicated his father's evil and repudiated his father's turn of mind.

### ASSASSINATION AND BURIAL 11 Kings 21:23-26

V.23 - "servants" - Courtiers or palace officials. Amon was murdered at the age of 24 by the men who had probably influenced both him and his father into the evil they committed.

V.24 - The people in turn slew the courtiers - this paved the way for a more suitable education of Josiah in divine things.

V.26 - "buried in his sepulchre" - Buried near his father - "Uzza" which is the Hebrew for strength.



# JOSIAH - The Youthful Reformer

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Yahweh his foundation".

FIRST MENTION - 1 Kings 13:2

LAST MENTION - Zeph.1:1

LENGTH OF REIGN - 31 years

From B.C. 639-609

AGE AT ACCESSION - 8 years

DEATH - 39

FATHER - Amon-"to train, to be skilled".

MOTHER - Jedidah-"beloved".

SIGNIFICANT REFERENCES - 1 Kings 13:2; Jer.1:2; Zeph.1:1, Jer. 22:15-16.

1 Kings 13:2 - Josiah was named in a prophecy 340 years before his birth as being the one who would cleanse the land of the idolatry of Jeroboam.

Jer. 1:2 - Jeremiah commenced to prophesy as a young man in the 13th year of Josiah's reign when Josiah was 21. They were mutually sympathetic over the parlous state of the ecclesia and were companions in the work of reformation.

Zeph. 1:1 - Zephaniah was a fourth generation descendent of Hezekiah and therefore a kinsman of Josiah in whose reign he prophesied. His influence and prophecies had an important affect on the young king.

Jer. 22:15-16 - Josiah's character was patterned upon Yahweh's character. He did "Judgement and justice" and "judged the cause of the poor and needy".

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

Josiah is unique amongst the kings of Israel and Judah as the only one against whom nothing adverse is recorded. While Solomons words are true; "For there is no man that sinneth not", the divine chronicler is silent upon the subject of Josiah's weaknesses and an unblemished record remains as a monument to a truly great man. His greatness was not in anyway marred by his refusal to heed the warning of Pharoah-necho, "Forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not". Why should Josiah be any more disposed to accept the claims of a godless Gentile king than was Hezekiah in the face of the blasphemous claims of Sennacherib? His death at the hands of Necho at the early age of 39 was in fulfillment of the promise made to him that he would be removed before the wrath of Yahweh descended upon Judah and Jerusalem, and was therefore in a sense a manifestation of divine mercy. The motive of Josiah in going out against Necho was clearly to prevent Judah from becoming the meat in the political "sandwich"

between Egypt and Assyria. This final act of Josiah was true to character - he always put the welfare of the ecclesia before himself and it is this aspect of his character that features most prominently in a study of his life.

Josiah ascended the throne at the age of 8 after the assassination of his father Amon and the purge of the royal courtiers responsible for his death. It is obvious that a child of such tender age could not rule the kingdom alone nor undertake his own education in divine things, and therefore the guidance and education of the boy-king that was to develop in later years one of the most zealous and singleminded of Yahweh's servants must be attributed to others. Careful examination of the record reveals four people who may have played a part in shaping the direction of Josiah's life. Firstly there was his mother Jedidah, "the beloved" "whom Yah had adorned" with the meek and quiet spirit of the holy women of old. Secondly the influence of Shaphan the faithful scribe is undoubted. He appears to have been very close to the young king and was clearly his most trusted and reliable servant. That he was considerably older than Josiah appears from the fact that he had a son, Ahikam who was a member of Josiah's delegation to Huldah. The subsequent history of Shaphan's sons in relation to the prophet Jeremiah illustrate that the faithful scribe had ruled his own house well and in the process had probably been responsible for the early education of Josiah.

Next to Shaphan was Hilkiah the high priest who was almost certainly the father of Jeremiah the prophet (Jer.1:1). His faithfulness shines from the record and in view of the fact that much of the responsibility of ruling the kingdom fell upon the high priest in cases such as this it may be assumed that he played an important part in Josiah's development into manhood. Finally, the influence of Zephaniah the prophet cannot be underestimated. The opening verse of Zephaniah's prophecy is peculiar inasmuch as it traces his antecedents back four generations to one "Hizkiah" which is identical in the Hebrew to Hezekiah. It would appear that Zephaniah was a member of the royal household having descended from Hezekiah and therefore would have had easy access to the young king. The purge of idolatry by Josiah in his twelfth year may be attributed to the influence of Zephaniah who roundly condemned the idolatry of Judah and the black-frocked Chemarims who promoted it.

Josiah "began to seek after the God of David his father" at the age of 16. It is a credit to him that he should commence a search to find Yahweh at such an early age but it is even more remarkable when it is considered that his quest was undertaken without "a book of the Law" which was not discovered until 10 years later. At the age of 20 he had gained sufficient knowledge from his mentors concerning the worship of Yahweh to realise the extent of the apostasy into which Judah had slumped during the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, and he instituted a purge of idolatry which was carried on for six years until a dramatic event occurred that shook him to his foundations and galvanised him into even more zealous activity.

The discovery of the book of the law during the cleansing and repairing of the temple in Josiah's 18th year had a profound effect on the young king. Few have ever "trembled" at God's word as he did when it was read in his hearing by Shaphan the scribe. Josiah immediately sprang into action in a desperate bid to avert the divine judgements on a guilty nation. A delegation returned from Huldah the prophetess with a message that confirmed his worst fears and under the shadow of the impending judgement of God the character of Josiah shone brightly as he feverishly commenced a reformation that stood no chance of success, but had as its prime objective the salvation



of the nation. Such was the character of Josiah. His own position was secure and his eternal wellbeing guaranteed but he did not slacken his efforts to redeem the nation from the judgement that was justly about to fall upon them. A renewed and more widespread purge of idolatry was preceded by a national gathering of the people at which Josiah secured by command and coercion a covenant from them to dedicate themselves to Yahweh. A Passover followed which became renowned for its unprecedented meticulousness in observing the requirements of the Law; but it was all to no avail.

The reformation of Josiah was a dismal failure because it failed to reach the hearts of the people. Circumspection was not accompanied by introspection. Profession was not matched by performance. The nation's ceremonial observances were hollow, and while human observers may have thought they saw evidence of a genuine spiritual revival, Yahweh was not deceived. "And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly (mg. "in false-hood), saith Yahweh". Jer. 3:10. The total lack of genuine response from the nation is beautifully illustrated in the description of the manner in which Josiah secured a covenant to serve Yahweh from the people assembled in Jerusalem. After reading the entire Pentateuch to the people, "the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before Yahweh to walk after Yahweh, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul ...". Note how the word "their" in 11 Kings 23:3 is in italics indicating that it is not in the original text. A comparison with 11 Chron. 34:31 reveals the intended meaning of Yahweh's Chronicler; "with all his heart and with all his soul". This was Josiah's covenant: the people only entered into it for fear of the king. There were few who shared Josiah's zeal. Jer. 5:1.

In view of the incorrigibility of the people and the absence of a book of the Law until late in his reign the divine summary of Josiah is truly remarkable; "And like unto him was there no king before him that turned to Yahweh with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him". 11 Kings 23:25. It was inevitable that this profound reverence and love of Yahweh's word should develop in Josiah a likeness to the Deity himself - Jer. 22:15-16.

### HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF JOSIAH

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession aged 8	21:24-26	33:25
Divine estimation of his reign	22:1-2	34:1-2
Seeks Yahweh at age 16		34:3
Purges idolatry aged 20		34:3-7
Repairs the temple aged 26	22:3-7	34:8-13
Book of the Law found - is greatly moved	22:8-11	34:14-19
Sends to Huldah the prophetess	22:12-14	34:20-22
Yahweh's reply through Huldah	22:15-20	34:23-28
People gathered - reads Law to them	23:1-2	34:29-30
Makes a covenant to serve Yahweh	23:3	34:31-32
Institutes another purge of idolatry	23:4-14	34:33
Fulfills prophecy at Bethel	23:15-20	
Keeps the great Jubilee Passover	23:21-23	35:1-19
Another purge of idolatry in Judah	23:24	
Divine estimation of his greatness	23:25	
Yahweh's wrath against Judah remains	23:26-28	

## THE ALLIANCE OF EGYPT WITH ASSYRIA AND THE DEATH OF JOSIAH

The death of Josiah. Archeology has facilitated a correct translation of the passage dealing with Josiah's death and revealed the reason for Pharoah-necho's advance toward the Euphrates. "In his (Josiah's) days Pharoah Necho king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. King Josiah went to meet him; and Pharoah Necho slew him at Megiddo, when he saw him" (11 Kings 23:29, R.S.V.). Heretofore, in the absence of an archeological clue the phrase "Pharoah Necho went up to the king of Assyria" has been wrongly translated "went up against the king of Assyria" (A.V. & A.R.V.). While it is true the Hebrew preposition 'al here employed may mean "against", the historical context shows that in this passage it has one of its more specialised meanings.

Historians used to be perplexed why Josiah advanced against Necho when the Pharoah was on his way to fight Assyria, the ancient enemy of the Hebrews. The Babylonian Chronicle published by C.J. Gadd in 1923 has put the whole matter in a new light and shows that Pharoah-necho did not advance against the Assyrian at all, but went to his aid.

Upon Ashurbanipal's death in 633 B.C., the Assyrian empire declined rapidly. In 612 B.C. Nineveh fell under attack by a coalition of Babylonians, Medes and Scythians. A remnant of the Assyrian army fled west to Haran and made it a temporary capital. The king of Egypt, Pharoah-necho, accordingly, came to help the Assyrian remnant and their King Ashuruballit, who stood at bay for several years at Carchemish under the combined attacks of the Medes and the Babylonians.

Josiah, no lover of Assyria, and not wishing any aid to reach the hard-pressed Assyrians, went to Megiddo to stop Necho, but was killed by the Egyptian. Necho in turn, was overwhelmingly defeated when he eventually clashed with Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish on the Euphrates in 605 B.C.

With the battle of Carchemish two ancient empires passed away forever, and Egypt never again became a first-rate power. The magnificent city of Carchemish, with a long and brilliant career behind it, was utterly destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and lay buried under desert dust until modern excavations brought its interesting monuments to the light of day.

An Extract from Archaeology and the O.T.  
by Merrill F. Unger.

11 Kings 23:29 (R.S.V.) - "In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. King Josiah went to meet him; and Pharaoh Necho slew him at Megiddo, when he saw him."

Josiah of Judah

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Slain by Necho of Egypt at Megiddo	23:29-30	35:20-23
Buried in Jerusalem - people mourn		35:24
Jeremiah laments for Josiah		35:25
Final summary		35:26-27

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Kings 22:1-2

V.1 - "Josiah" - Heb. "Yahweh his foundation". He lived up to his name as later years were to show. If Amon named him he certainly did not have any control over the matter for his name had been predetermined by God 340 years before; 1 Kings 13:2. Having Yahweh as his foundation amidst the apostasy of the ecclesia would be most necessary if he was to succeed in the task before him.

"eight years old" - Born when Amon was 16 - this was not uncommon. Amon being murdered at 24 probably by providential appointment; Josiah's most impressionable years were left to the education of his mind by his mother in the absence of his father and the 'courtiers' (who having slain Amon were in turn recompensed with death by the people). These courtiers were most likely the influence that had caused Amon to reestablish all that Manasseh had broken down following his humiliation and repentance. Their predecessors may have been the force behind Manasseh who could not have reigned at the age of 12 without assistance. During the early years of Josiah's reign the government of the nation was normally left in the control of the high priest who was one of the faithful men involved in Josiah's reformation - namely Hilkiah. Cp. 11 Kings 12:2.

"he reigned thirty and one years" - He died a young man aged 39 - his ambitions for the good of the ecclesia being frustrated.

"his mother's name Jedidah" - Heb. "beloved" from the root for David. The name of Solomon was Jedadiah meaning "beloved of Yahweh - it was given to him by Yahweh through Nathan 11 Sam.12:25, and comes from the same root. Doubtless Josiah's mother had a tremendous influence for good on him. His education at this crucial and vital stage was the foundation for his work in later years.

"daughter of Adaiah" - Heb. "whom Yahweh hath adorned". She was one of the holy women of old time spoken of by Peter, 1 Pet.3:3-5.

"Boscath" - Heb. "swell of ground". A town in the Shephelah - the lowlands of Judah mentioned in Josh.15:39.

V.2 - "right" - Heb. "straight" - he was upright.

"sight" - Heb. "eyes" (Roth.). Josiah was being carefully watched by Yahweh - a principle of our walk as well, Psa.34:15, 66:7; Prov.5:21; 15:3.

"walked" - He was a man prepared to do by action what was right.

"David his father" - "David" (Heb. "beloved") was his father not Amon. For the Spirit to say that he walked in all the way of David was no small feat for Josiah, amidst the apostasy and idolatry of the ecclesia.

"turn not aside" - "turn" in the Heb. is "to turn off". Josiah in 39 years of life and 31 years of that on the throne did not have one major sin recorded against him.

"to the right hand or the left" - Spoken of no other King including David. A quotation from Deut.17:20 (5:32). The context of Deut.17:18-20 speaks of the king writing out a copy of the Law so that he might learn to fear Yahweh and "turn not aside to the right hand or the left". The purpose of this was that

he should prolong his days on the throne. The omission of the word "commandment" in Kings may be because the book of the Law was not found until Josiah's 18th year.

### THE PURGE OF IDOLATRY 11 Chron. 34:3-7

V.3 - "eighth year of his reign" - Now aged 16. Having been well educated by his mother he now began to make decisions for himself and accept responsibility.

"while he was yet young" - Roth. "he being yet a boy". At an early age he repudiated flesh and looked towards Yahweh - the record emphasises this.

"young" - NA'AR - an active young boy.

"he began to seek" - "began" - CHALAL - to strike through"; in this sense, to use a wedge for the purpose of opening. "Seek" - DARASH - to tread or beat a path, used figuratively to learn or study; also used in the sense of following by search. He was a young lad who despite the condition of the ecclesia and the attitude of the people of Judah was determined to seek Yahweh.

"the God of his father" - Not-Amon his father.

"twelfth year" - Now 20. Probably began to reign without any assistance. He had come to a firm conviction by this time. Something had to be done about the idolatry and apostate condition of the ecclesia. The four years since he began to seek Yahweh had prepared his own mind.

"purge" - TAHER - to be bright, to be pure, clear, unadulterated, uncontaminated. Mal.3:3 (purifier, purify). Ezra 6:20; Neh.12:30 (priests purified).

"high places" - Places of worship for any strange god. Burning of incense was part of the worship - immorality was prevalent.

"groves" - ASHERIM - Roth. "sacred stems", (carved tree stumps). Places where immoral worship was openly conducted as described in Lev.18 & 20.

"carved and molten images" - Molten images not mentioned in Kings but Amon had served these, 11 Chron.33:22.

V.4-7 - This is a summary of 11 Kings 23:4-20 which gives a much more detailed account. This record shows what he commenced to do, while Kings gives details of the purge following the discovery of the book of the Law. Josiah followed the Law - Deut.7:5 - in grinding the idols to pieces.

V.6 - "mattocks" - Lit. "in their ruins". These were the ruins of the cities of the northern kingdom destroyed by the Assyrians. Josiah's purge included even places where there was no one who could be influenced by the idols.

### THE TEMPLE REPAIRED - JOSIAH'S 18th YEAR 11 Kings 22:3-7

V.3 - "eighteenth year" - Now 26. His purging of the land having commenced at the age of 20. Jeremiah commenced prophesying one year later, Jer.1:1-3. Zephaniah had probably already commenced, Zeph.1:1.

"sent Shaphan, son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam" - Shaphan was a faithful scribe and his sons had a long and close association with the prophet Jeremiah. He was 'Secretary of State', 11 Sam.8:17. His name means "coney", see Prov.30:24-26 and compare his position. Shaphan's name is mentioned throughout Jeremiah's prophecy. His son Ahikam saved Jeremiah from death, Jer.26:24. His grandson Gedaliah cared for the prophet when he had been released from prison by the Babylonians 39:14. His son, Elasah was one of the messengers who carried Jeremiah's letter to the elders who had been carried to Babylon during the reign of Jeconiah, 29:3. His son Gemariah had tried to protect the scroll dictated to Baruch by Jeremiah and burnt by Jehoiakim 36:10-12 & 25.

### THE PROPHET JEREMIAH AND HIS MESSAGE

The son of Hilkiah a priest in Anathoth. This Hilkiah may well have been the high priest of Josiah's reign. Jeremiah commenced his prophecy in the 13th year of Josiah. Jeremiah means "whom Yahweh hath appointed". He was principally a prophet of doom to his own generation while a prophet of hope for the future. The early chapters of his book, probably to chapter 12 were delivered in Josiah's reign - hardly a word is spoken of Josiah's reformation due to its ineffectiveness on the hearts of the people - Chap.5:1 (emphasises the small number who were like Josiah). In Chapt.11:3 Yahweh reminds Israel of the cursings of the Law shouted from Mt. Ebal, Deut.27:15-26, which sins they were committing openly. It almost seems that Jeremiah completely disregarded the work of Josiah and prophesied as if Manasseh or Amon were still on the throne. A mention of Josiah's reformation is made in Chapt.3:10 - "And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart but feignedly, saith Yahweh". Chapt.10 speaks of some of the superstitions and customs adopted by Manasseh from Babylon. The following is a list of verses showing the apostasy rampant in Judah pointed out by Jeremiah in his first ten chapters :- 1:16,2:8,2:19,2:20,2:23,2:27-28,2:30,2:32,2:34,2:36,3:1-2,3:6,3:9,3:13,4:22,5:8-9,5:26-28,5:31,6:10,6:13,7:4-6,7:8-9,7:17-18,7:30,7:31,8:5,8:10,8:19,9:1-2,9:3-6,9:9,9:11,9:13-14,10:1-4,10:14.

Jeremiah's main message was of impending judgement - 1:15-16,4:7,4:13,5:6.

### THE PROPHET ZEPHANIAH AND HIS MESSAGE

He was a member of the royal family; his lineage going back to Hezekiah, Chap.1:1. This being the case he probably had great influence on Josiah. He prophesied just before Josiah's reformation - this probably caused Josiah to be urged into cleansing the land of idolatry. Zephaniah like Jeremiah was probably quite young when he commenced his ministry. His immediate message was of impending disaster, Chap.1. These prophesies of judgement upon Judah for idolatry may have initiated Josiah's reformation and Jeremiah's prophesies one year after he had given them impetus. The importance of this prophet lies in his influence for good on the early education and attitude of Josiah. Zephaniah means "whom Yahweh hid" - Manasseh had not been able to find and eliminate him.

V.3 (cont) - Shaphan's grandson Gedaliah was made governor of Judah by the King of Babylon and he was a harbinger to Jeremiah - Jeremiah trusted this man, 40:5-6. Gedaliah backed up Jeremiah's prophecy, 40:9 - Cp. 29:4-7, 38:17-18. In Jer.43:6 the record states that the king of Babylon had left the residue of the people in the care of Gedaliah, Jeremiah and Baruch. ("Yah had become great" - "whom Yah hath appointed" - "blessed"). These three are spoken of as being contemporaries and intimate partners in the work of the Truth.

"Azaliah" - "whom Yahweh hath reserved".

"Meshullam" - "friend". Most probably the one mentioned in 11 Chron.34:12. Shaphan was most likely a Levite. He was sent with Maaseiah and Joah, 11 Chron.34:8.

"to the house of Yahweh" - Having purged Judah and Jerusalem of most of the idols, altars and high places and while this work was still in progress Josiah now turned to the temple which had been polluted by Manasseh and Amon. Shaphan the faithful scribe is despatched to convene a meeting with Hilkiyah the high priest.

V.4 - "Hilkiyah" - Heb. "the portion of Yahweh". Could well be the father of Jeremiah. He was the high priest at the time and gave his full support to Josiah's reformation.

"sum the silver" - Roth. "he poured out the silver", ie. to make up or take account of.

"which is brought into the house of Yahweh" - Similar record to that of 11 Kings 12:10-12. The priests accepted money from the people and put it immediately in a chest by the door or threshold.

V.5 - "breaches" - The house of Yahweh was in disrepair. It had been abandoned during Manasseh's reign largely due to the worship conducted in the high places. Manasseh had built altars to all the host of heaven and had erected an Asherah in the house itself but worship was gradually decentralised and the house fell into disrepair. Now the money collected from the people was put into the hands of the overseers who procured labour for the repairs to be undertaken. The overseers are named, 11 Chron.34:12, Jahath, Obadiah, Zechariah, Meshullam. In 11 Chron.34 the dilapidations mentioned were mostly in the chambers of the house. Shaphan is sent on this errand with Maaseiah ("work of Yahweh"), governor of Jerusalem and Joah ("whose brother is Yahweh") the recorder (Heb. to mark to remember).

### THE BOOK OF THE LAW FOUND IN THE TEMPLE 11 Kings 22:8-14

V.8 - "the book of the law" - This was found by Hilkiyah in the process of carrying into effect the instructions of the king delivered by Shaphan, 11 Chron.34:14. Keil believes that this expression relates to the 5 books of Moses. This is supported by 11 Chron.34:14. This was not the only copy of the law which was left but may well have been the only one in Jerusalem. Manasseh's purge would have seen to that when he slew all the prophets and adherents of the true worship of Yahweh.

"he read it all" - This does not necessarily imply that he read all of it - but that he read from it. See note v10.

V.9 - "Shaphan came to the king" - He recognised the importance of the discovery and conveyed it to the king.

"gathered the money" - Roth. "poured out". Shaphan advises Josiah that his instructions had been put into effect.

V.10 - "Hilkiyah ....hath delivered a book" - Shaphan having passed on the message now reveals the book of the law which he knew would be of great interest to Josiah.

"read it" - Ie. "he read in it" - 11 Chron.34:18, not as in 11 Kings 23:2 where "all the words of the law were read". Both Keil and Roth. have "he read therein" for 11 Chron.34:18. What part he read is conjecture but it was probably the curses which would result through disobedience, eg.Deut.28 & Lev. 26.

V.11 - "the words" - Not all the words as in 11 Kings 23:2.

"rent his clothes" - Always a sign of deep despair and concern. Josiah's immediate and profound reaction to the reading from the book - the immediate despatch of a delegation to Huldah and the fierce method by which he now attacked the problem of idolatry are almost conclusive evidence that he had not had in his possession a copy of the 5 books of Moses before.

V.12 - "the king commanded Hilkiyah" - The deputation is immediately despatched to Huldah under the leadership of Hilkiyah, a testimony to his integrity and the confidence that Josiah placed in him.

"Ahikam the son of Shaphan" - Heb. "brother of rising". This man was the supporter of Jeremiah in later years, Jer.26:24. The context of the chapter shows the authority that he commanded in the reign of Jehoiakim - he was a faithful man like his father Shaphan.

"Achbor the son of Michaiah" - Achbor, Heb. "attacking - like the nibbling of a mouse". Micaiah - "who is like Yah". Achbor's son Elnathan was instrumental in having Urijah the prophet killed by Jehoiakim, Jer.26:22. He is also mentioned as one of the princes in Jer.36:12.

"Shaphan the scribe" - The 'secretary of state' was of course amongst the members of the deputation.

"Asaiah" - "Whom Yahweh created". An officer of the king. This completed an impressive group - probably the core of Josiah's supporters in the reformation. Their errand was urgent - "What was the destiny of the nation?".

V.13 - "inquire of Yahweh" - Josiah was aware that there were some in the nation through whom Yahweh would speak. The reading of the curses of the law contained in Lev.26 & Deut.28 struck fear into Josiah and he felt an urgent need to know how Yahweh felt after the long abuses which he had suffered from Judah's kings culminating in the reigns of Manasseh and Amon.

"for me" - Josiah wanted to know what Yahweh thought of his efforts to overthrow idolatry and false worship. What would be his lot? He felt that he had done his best to seek Yahweh the God of David his father.

"for the people" - I.e. of Jerusalem. Jeremiah had been told to look for a man in Jerusalem who worked righteousness so that Yahweh might pardon the city. There was none except in the temple and in the king's palace, Jer.5:1. Josiah wanted to know the destiny of the city.

"for all Judah" - The destiny of the nation became his next concern. The curses of the law threatened the overthrow of the nation - would Yahweh do it?

"our fathers have not hearkened" - The history of Israel had been one of disobedience except for a few periods of light. The present generation were no better and perhaps Josiah here refers to the times of Manasseh and Amon.

V.14 - "Huldah the prophetess" - Her name means "a weasel". It is evident that both Jeremiah and Zephaniah were unavailable at this time. Huldah dwelt in the college or school. This was a surviving remnant of the school of the prophets established by Samuel to retain the teaching of the Truth amongst the people. Her husband Shallum was keeper of the clothes either of the king or the priests. She was evidently renowned for her prophecies.

## YAHWEH'S MESSAGE THROUGH HULDAH THE PROPHETESS 11 Kings 22:15-

V.15 - "Tell the man" - The reply of Huldah to the members of the deputation is noticeably impersonal; the name of Josiah not being mentioned. "Tell the man" - this refers to Josiah but is different to v18 which directly refers to

him - this was done because Vv 15-17 describe the judgement pending on the nation to which the king himself was to be exempt, Vv 18-19.

V.16 - These are the judgements outlined in Lev.26 & Deut.28 - Josiah's fear for the nation's future was well founded.

V.17 - "Because" - The specific sins of the people are now detailed with obvious reference to the idolatry and superstitions of Manasseh.

"they have forsaken me" - This is mentioned as the foremost sin of the people which was a direct contrast to the king himself, 11 Kings 23:25. The first commandment was to have no other gods but to love Yahweh with the whole heart soul and might. This had been abandoned by the influence of Manasseh.

"the works of their hands" - The idols which they had made - the Asherah - carved and molten images. Isaiah explained the folly of idols, Isa.44:9-20. See also Psa.115:4-8.

"shall not be quenched" - God's wrath against this place (Jerusalem) was not to be quenched as past history has shown. Jeremiah prophesied a similar judgement, Jer.4:4. Both Amos and Isaiah had previously prophesied a similar judgement, Amos 5:6; Isa.1:31. This had been pending for some time.

V.18 - "king of Judah" - Josiah had asked concerning himself and the propheticess now turned to him. He was to be excluded from the judgements coming.

V.19 - "tender" - RAKAK - to soften. Josiah had allowed his mind and his emotions to be malleable to divine principles. Contrary to the impression gained from Josiah's ruthless disposal of idolatry he was in fact tender and soft of heart, prepared to be moulded and shaped by God's word.

"humbled thyself" - This was a most necessary characteristic if one desired to acquire Yahweh's approbation - Isaiah had outlined this, Isa.66:2. There is a difference between Josiah's humility and that of other kings such as Ahab and Manasseh. The verse goes on to show that Josiah humbled himself because of what Yahweh had spoken against Jerusalem and his people not what had been spoken against him personally as in the cases mentioned.

"I will gather thee unto thy fathers" - This is as good as saying - "I will kill you". Josiah was to die by divine intervention in mercy to him. This also blatantly pointed out the hopelessness of his ambition to reform Judah as Yahweh's judgements were coming regardless of his efforts.

"grave in peace" - The divine assurance that he was a righteous and upright man - in mercy, God was to remove him that his eyes should not see the evil that was to come. With this heavy message the deputation returned to Josiah.

### THE BOOK OF THE LAW READ TO ALL THE PEOPLE 11 Kings 23:1-3

V.1 - "And the king sent" - Leave out the chapter division. Josiah upon hearing the prophecy immediately proclaimed a national conference of elders. Not content with having his own salvation secured he manifested his love for the nation and worked indefatigably to institute a spiritual revival which might turn the tide of divine judgement.

V.2 - "the king went up to the house" - He directed the nation's attention to the focal point of their worship. He gathered them into the temple court. "priests, prophets" - Chronicles has priests and Levites. However, Jeremiah and Zephaniah may have been amongst them.

"all the people" - ie. of Jerusalem plus those summoned from the country.



"he read all the words" - He had read to the people - this task was assigned to the priests, Deut.31:9-12. All the words in contrast to some of the words read to Josiah. These were read from the book which had been found.

V.3 - "stood by a pillar" - As in 11 Kings 11:14,17. This was so a covenant could be made between Yahweh, the king and the people.

"all their heart and all their soul" - Note "their" is in italics and compare the parallel record of 11 Chron.34:31; this was Josiah's covenant. A reference to the first and great commandment, Deut.6:5 to which was added the need for careful attention to the words of the Law v7. Josiah had done this but without the assistance of a book of the law - now his zeal was greatly increased. See the divine estimation of him, 11 Kings 23:25.

"the people stood to the covenant" - But they had no intention of performing the covenant. They gave assent to it; tacitly entered into it but this was only superficial and without real meaning, see Jer.11:9-10,25:3,3:10.

### A RENEWED PURGE OF IDOLATRY 11 Kings 23:4-14

V.4 - "the king commanded" - This is characteristic of Josiah - his zeal for Yahweh knew no bounds. His youthful vigour did not permit an approach which may have deeply influenced his subjects. He was quick to act on his own convictions but did not allow time for others to acquire the same convictions, however for this he can be completely excused because of the pitiful condition of the ecclesia. He had only a few who supported him in the same spirit. "priests of the second order" - i.e. the priests ranking under the high priest himself.

"keepers of the door" - The Levites whose duty it was to watch the temple, 11 Kings 22:4; 1 Chron.23:5.

"vessels" - For Baal, the Asherah, and the host of heaven. These were the apparatus used for false worship.

"burned them without Jerusalem" - According to Deut.7:25,12:3. This was the action to be taken with idols and anything connected with them. They were taken outside Jerusalem ("outside the camp" - i.e. they were unclean) and burnt in the Kidron Valley. The ashes were carried to Bethel - probably the same time as the events of v15-20.

V.5 - "put down" - Some have "he slew". Keil has "abolished". Heb. SHABATH - to repose, i.e. desist from exertion. V9 would suggest that they were not slain.

"kings of Judah had ordained" - No doubt a reference to Manasseh and Amon. These were the "Chemarims" or black robed priests spoken of in Hos.10:5 & Zeph.1:4. These false priests were the product of Jeroboam's idolatry set up at Bethel and adopted by Manasseh and Amon for their corrupt worship. Manasseh had introduced the worship of the host of heaven.

"planets" - MAZZALAH - constellations. (Note sun and moon represented male and female deities).

V.6 - "brought out the grove" - Roth. "And he brought forth the sacred stem out of the house of Yahweh". This was the image of the Asherah made by Manasseh and subsequently removed by him, 11 Chron.33:15, but later replaced by Amon, 11 Chron.33:22. This was the greatest abomination of Manasseh's reign apart from the shedding of the innocent blood of the prophets. To set up an idol representing human fertility and the worship of immorality, including sodomy in the very house upon which Yahweh's glory had descended

in the days of Solomon and the place in which he had chosen to put his name, evoked the bitter wrath of the Deity. Josiah having removed those who conducted the worship now moved to destroy the symbol of the worship. The Asherah was transported to the valley of the Kidron and burnt. What remained was stamped into powder and strewn upon the graves of the common people. Jer.26:23. Asa, years before had burnt an idol in this area, 1 Kings 15:13 and Hezekiah carried some idols to this place, 11 Chron.29:16 but none were so thorough as Josiah. Chronicles has - "he strowed it (the dust) upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them". These undoubtedly were the men and women who had lived in the days of Manasseh.

"strowed" - ZARAO - to sprinkle, used of the sprinkling of the blood under the law.

"Kidron" - Roth. "ravine".

V.7 - "brake down the houses of the Sodomites" - "brake down" - NATHATS - tear down; Josiah now turns to the devotees who seduced the people to immoral worship. The Sodomites were male 'priests' who offered themselves by prostitution to men and women as an integral part of the worship of the Asherah, 1 Kings 14:24. Ellicott has - "the cabins of the Sodomites".

"by the house of Yahweh" - Roth. "in the house of Yahweh", (all Commentators agree). Probably these cabins or tents had been erected in the court of the house and were the places where the immorality was conducted.

"women wove hangings for the Asherah" - "hangings" - BAYITH - houses. These were small tent temples for either the housing of images or the conduct of prostitution.

V.8 - "all the priests out of the cities of Judah" - Josiah caused all the priests of the high places to migrate to Jerusalem. These were the Levitical priests, v9. Having had the high places vacated he commanded their desecration and defilement. Here the priests had burned incense decentralising the worship of the temple.

"Geba to Beersheba" - "Geba" - near Ramah about 3 hours to the north of Jerusalem (6 miles), on the northern frontier of Judah, Josh.18:24. Beersheba was over 35 miles south on the southern frontier of Judah.

"the high places of the gates" - Probably only one gate was involved - that of the governor Joshua whose residence was on the left as one entered the city. The high places erected here were probably for visitors to offer worship before leaving so that they might secure a safe journey home. Josiah tore these down. It would appear that he thought that by removing places of incense offering he could concentrate the attention of the people on the worship of Yahweh in the temple which he was about to re-institute. However this failed as the next verse shows.

V.9 - "Nevertheless the priests...came not up" - The priests which Josiah had deposed were not allowed to offer on the altar in Jerusalem because of their past actions.

"but they did eat" - They were not permitted to partake of the altar offerings with their contemporaries the legitimate priests but had to take their meals apart "among their brethren" i.e. their own company. They were probably made to do the menial tasks associated with the worship, Ezek.44:10-14; Lev. 21:21-22.

"eat of the unleavened bread" - Roth. omits "of the" and has "they did eat unleavened bread". This was a term used to indicate partaking of altar sacrifices, Lev.2:1-11; 6:16-18, 10:12. Once more Josiah showed his zeal

for strict conformity to the law of Moses.

V.10 - "defiled Topheth"- "defiled" - TAME - to be foul. "Tophet" - Heb. "a smiting" (in a figure of) contempt. The high place of Tophet was situated in the Valley of the son of Hinnom (a Jebusite -could mean "shrieking") This is where children were offered in sacrifice to Molech. Molech is an appellative meaning "reigning one" - a god of the Ammonites - a variation of Baal. This was a hideous rite introduced by Solomon, 1 Kings 11:5 and practised by Ahaz, 11 Chron.28:3 and Manasseh, 11 Kings 21:6 and utterly forbidden, Lev. 18:21, 20:1-5 by the Law. Josiah caused this worship to cease by utterly desecrating Topheth.

V.11 - "took away the horses" - Roth. "And he did away with the horses". "took away" - same word as "put down" v5. Some have "he killed" but most (probably Ellicott and Keil are correct) "cleared away". These horses had been "devoted"(Roth) to the sun. They drew the chariots of the sun in solemn processions held in honour of that deity. Horses were regarded as sacred to the sun by many nations including the Assyrians from whom the custom was probably adopted by Ahaz, Manasseh and Amon.

"chamber of Nathan-melech" - This was situated at the "entering of the house of Yahweh". Keil suggests that this chamber was one of the storehouses within the court mentioned in Neh.10:38-39; 1 Chron.9:26; Ezra 8:29. These chambers were in the outer court. "Nathan-melech" means "given of the king" and this was probably the case. Manasseh having instituted this custom had probably given this chamber to stable the devoted horses. Nathan-melech was a eunuch who may have been in charge of the horses and chariots.

"suburbs" - A Persian word meaning an open house - some Commentators say it was a cloister around the court by which the chambers were entered from without.

"chariots of the sun" - Having removed the horses Josiah now burns the chariots they drew.

V.12 - "altars....on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz" - These altars were built on the roof of an upper chamber on the wall surrounding the outer court, Jer.35:4. Ahaz had built this and it was removed by Hezekiah and replaced by Manasseh and Amon hence the following phrase "the kings of Judah". The altars were used to worship all the host of heaven. Jer.19:13; 32:29; Zeph. 1:5.

"altars which Manasseh ... two courts" - See 11 Kings 21:5. These were also for the worship of all the host of heaven.

"brake them down from thence" - "brake" - RUWTS - to run or to rush; indicating the haste employed by Josiah in removing these objects. However these altars were broken down and crushed into powder before being transported to the Kidron and cast into the stream. (Roth. "ravine"). Roth.-"did the king break down and hurried from thence". Josiah was thorough in his purge of these idolatrous and false altars.

V.13 - "the high places .....before Jerusalem" - These were situated on the southern summit of the Mount of Olives (directions were taken by facing east). They were built in the first instance by Solomon who succumbed to the idolatrous whims of his multitude of wives, 1 Kings 11:5-8. Hezekiah had destroyed them and Manasseh had rebuilt them, 11 Kings 21:3.

"mount of corruption" - The Mount of Olives; "corruption" from the root meaning destructive (in the sense of having snared) - MASHCHYTH. Roth.-"destruction". So called because of its effect upon the nation through idolatry.

"which Solomon" - He is specifically marked out as being the instigator of this idolatry which finally led to the destruction of the nation.

"Ashtoreth" - Another name for Astarte the goddess of the Phoenicians and Canaanites. The Babylonian version was Ishtar - identified with the planet Venus; the goddess of sexual love, maternity, and fertility. Prostitution was part of the worship of this goddess. Her worship was early established in Zidon - hence named the abomination of the Zidonians, 1 Kings 11:5&33; 11 Kings 23:13. Aphrodite and Venus of Rome were the Grecian and Roman versions of Astarte. These all had their origin in Semiramis the mother of Nimrod (called the Queen of heaven) who was noted for her extreme beauty. Astarte was the goddess worshipped by the ancient world and was regarded as the very embodiment of everything attractive in female form and the perfection of female beauty. Because of its natural appeal to the flesh this worship pervaded the whole earth but under differing names.

"Chemosh" - The abomination of the Moabites, Num.21:29, Jer.48:46. Worshipped in the same manner as Molech by the sacrifice of children as burnt offerings - 11 Kings 3:27. The first two words "abomination" - SHIIQUTS in verse 13 have the same meaning - "to be filthy" but the last occurrence is different, see the next note.

"Milcom" - Another name for Molech the god of the Ammonites. "Abomination" - TOEBAH - disgusting, an abhorrence.

V.14 - "the images,....the groves" - Lit. "the pillars and the Asherahs".

The pillars would be the carved and molten images of 11 Chron.34:4. The Asherah were the tree stumps carved into grotesque shapes hence they broke in pieces the pillars and cut down the sacred stems.

"filled their places" - MEQOMAH - a standing. Their place or station. A term for the position of idols. Josiah defiled these positions with dead men's bones, Num.19:16.

### PROPHECY FULFILLED AT BETHEL 11 Kings 23:15-20

V.15 - "Moreover" - Roth. "Moreover also".

"the altars at Bethel" - Roth. "the altar that was in Bethel, the high place which Jeroboam". The altar and high place are synonymous. Josiah was determined to rid not only his own kingdom of idolatry but the area of the now defunct northern kingdom also - little did he realise that his zeal was being channelled by divine providence to fulfil a prophecy made 350 years earlier by the Man of God from Judah, 1 Kings 13:1-3. In Chron.34:6-7 (11 Chron) it seems that on this trip north he covered the area of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon and Naphtali, cutting down all the idols in sight and desecrating the high places and altars. Probably he took with him the dust mentioned in v4.

"Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin" - The man who lost an opportunity of gaining the sure mercies of David because of his personal ambition. The spirit continually designates him as the one who was responsible for the apostasy of Israel. Jeroboam - Heb. "contender for the people" was the son of Nebat ("to regard"). This altar was established by him to prevent his people from travelling to Jerusalem for the annual feasts, 1 Kings 12:26-33. It had been there for over 350 years. Bethel was on the border of Israel and Judah 11 miles north of Jerusalem. Jeroboam had set up a golden calf like that made in the wilderness, based on Apis the Egyptian deity. He had been to Egypt during the last years of Solomon's reign. Josiah realised that it was absolutely necessary to clean up all the land, even though Israel had been in captivity since the 6th of Hezekiah, 98 years before.

"burned the high place" - Having broken down the altar and the high place, Josiah set about to grind the whole lot into powder. This necessitated the cracking up of the rock slabs and so he kindled a fire under them for this purpose.

"stamped it small to powder" - "stamped" - DAQAD - to crush or crumble. This was no mean feat and would take a considerable amount of time. Josiah zealously overseered the whole operation.

"burned the grove" - Roth. "burned a sacred stem". The image of Astarte was here with its counterpart no doubt the image of Baal. Josiah's zeal to cleanse the northern kingdom was probably in an effort to influence the remnant of Israel to join themselves to his reformation.

V.16 - "as Josiah turned himself" - This event most probably occurred while Josiah's men were in the process of breaking down the high place. The prophecy of 1 Kings 13:1-3 required that the bones of the idolatrous priests be burnt upon the altar. Josiah in his singleminded zeal had probably not seen the sepulchres of these priests and it required divine providence to manipulate him to fulfil the prophecy. Yahweh knew that if Josiah saw the graves of these men he would immediately go into action and so he caused him to turn himself in their direction.

"spied the sepulchres" - Roth. "he saw the graves". Having seen these graves he interruptshis work and sends across a number of men to dig up the bones which had been there for 350 years. Having gathered the bones he brought them to the altar and burnt them thereon thus fulfilling the prophecy of the Man of God from Judah.

V.17 - "What title is that" - Roth. "What is yonder erection which I do see". "Title" same word used in Ezek.39:15, for the sign to be set up beside every bone discovered in the land after Armageddon. Also used in Jer.31:21. Josiah saw a memorial stone amongst the graves.

"men of the city" - These men must have been on the scene watching Josiah's work - at his enquiry they spoke. It was no doubt common knowledge amongst them having been handed down from generation to generation. Josiah was unaware of it. These men most likely marvelled in the fact that one of their "legends" as it were had actually come to pass.

"sepulchre of the man of God" - This was probably the city's graveyard as the old prophet from Samaria buried the man of God in his own grave, 1 Kings 13:30 and was subsequently buried there himself alongside him.

V.18 - "And he said" - Josiah's immediate reaction was to discriminate between the Man of God from Judah and the priests of the high places. Roth. "Let him rest", almost as though to say "Don't stir his bones, leave that to the resurrection". This may well have been a sign of forgiveness for the man of God. At this commandment they "let his bones alone". "Alone" - MALAT - escape. Two men lay here - one was a liar but for a motive which was good in itself, but not under the circumstances which had prevailed.

V.19 - "all the houses ...of the high places" - Buildings attached to the worship in these places. Having finished his work in Bethel Josiah now turns to all the cities of Samaria - in 11 Chron.34:6 the record states that he went as far north as the regions of Naphtali.

"Josiah took away" - Josiah removed these houses and did to them as he had done in Bethel - ie. burn them and crush the rest into powder. This would have taken some considerable time, as this was done in all the cities of

Samaria. Josiah was allowed freedom of movement through the northern kingdom because Assyria was now declining in power and influence.

V.20 - "he slew all the priests" - "slew" - ZABACH - to slaughter an animal (in sacrifice). Roth. "He sacrificed all the priests of the high places". Thus fulfilling the prophecy - but not at Bethel only 1 Kings 13:2. Whereas Josiah had only removed the priests of the high places in Judah he slew those in Israel - the difference being in the fact that the former were (sons of Aaron) Levites; the latter were not, see Deut.17:2-5. Having slain them he burnt their bones on the altars thus defiling them with filth and corruption. The work completed, he returned to Jerusalem.

### THE PASSOVER PROCLAIMED IN JOSIAH'S 18th YEAR 11 Kings 23:21-23

V.21 - "the king commanded" - Characteristic of Josiah. He coerced people into righteousness by legislation. He almost had no alternative because of their condition. Having now removed the places of idolatry and removing opportunity for the flesh to fulfil its lust he then institutes the Passover which was an enactment of the principles of Atonement. This was all done in his 18th year. His vigorous activity in removing idolatry and instituting the Passover all in the same year after the book of the law was found is proof that he did not have the first 4 books of Moses before. Otherwise why didn't he purge the idolatry spoken of in Leviticus? Why did he not hold a Passover? Why was he so moved to purge the land if only Deuteronomy was found - did not Leviticus 26 say the same things as Deut.28 in relation to impending judgement.

"keep the Passover" - Hezekiah set the precedent - 11 Chron.30:1, after his reformation.

"in the book of this covenant" - Incorrect translation. Roth. "in this book of the covenant". None other than the book found by Hilkiah, 11 Kings 22:8 & 23:2. Further proof that the book found was all 5 books of Moses - the Passover is not recorded in its particulars in Deuteronomy - if that alone was the book found the words of Josiah would be incongruous. Without a doubt he had no scripture until his 18th year when he was 26. 11 Chron.35:1-19 gives a detailed account of Josiah's Passover - for exactness in conformity to the law there was no Passover like this one from the time of Samuel through all the kings of Israel to Josiah's day, 11 Chron.35:18.

V.22 - "there was not holden such a Passover" - Chronicles says from the days of Samuel - Kings says from the days when Judges were set over the people. This Passover eclipsed all that had been held in the days of the Judges (450 years), the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah (360 years). An overall time of 930 years.

V.23 - "eighteenth year of king Josiah" - This gave Josiah one year or less from the sending of Shaphan to the institution of this Passover, to do all the things recorded in this chapter.

### REMOVAL OF CLANDESTINE IDOLATRY 11 Kings 23:24

V.24 - "the...familiar spirits" - Having abolished open and public idolatry and its attendant immorality Josiah now turns to the private superstitions of the people - these familiar spirits were the necromancers (a sorcerer who brought up the spirits of the dead) 1 Sam.28:7. The removal of these was commanded Lev.19:31. They had been established by Manasseh, 11 Kings 21:6.

"images" - Heb. teraphim; Roth. "household gods". Josiah now probed the homes to remove idolatry. These teraphim were small idols placed in the home as objects of veneration - Gen.31:19; Jud.17:5; 1 Sam.19:13.

"the idols" - Roth. "manufactured gods", Lev.26:30. Gesenius, "idol blocks" - Ewald, "doll images", 11 Kings 17:12. These amongst other abominations and defiling influences did Josiah remove from the homes and precincts of the city of Jerusalem and all Judah.

"that were spied" - RA'AH - seen. Probably many idols were concealed by their devotees.

"put away" - Roth. "consume". Ellicott; put out, did away with; Lev.20:27; Deut.18:9-10.

"the words of the law ....that Hilkiyah found" - Further proof that Josiah lacked the 5 books of Moses before his 18th year. Josiah having newly found the book was determined to do everything possible to perform the words written in it. His zeal however was not matched by the people, Jer.3:10.

### THE DIVINE ESTIMATION OF JOSIAH 11 Kings 23:25

V.25 - "And like unto him" - There was no king like Josiah either before or after him "that turned to Yahweh with all his heart, soul and might according to all the law of Moses". This was a direct quotation from Deut.6:5 which Christ said was the first and greatest commandment, Mark 12:29-30. In the same context a scribe commended by Christ, said that to do these things was far more valuable than the ritual offerings, Mark 12:32-34. Josiah clearly appreciated the principles of the law as well as the letter. In Jer.22:15-16 the prophet speaks of Josiah as having done judgement and justice and having judged the cause of the poor and needy which Yahweh designated as knowing him. Hence he kept the second great commandment - "love thy neighbour as thyself". A similar thing is said of Hezekiah but there is a distinct difference - 11 Kings 18:5-6. Hezekiah was noted for his implicit trust in Yahweh in difficult circumstances. Josiah was noted for his zeal to perform the commandments of Yahweh set down in the law.

### YAHWEH'S WRATH AGAINST JUDAH REMAINS 11 Kings 23:26-28

V.26 - "Notwithstanding" - Roth. "Howbeit Yahweh turned not away from the glow of his great anger wherewith his anger glowed against Judah because of all the provocations wherewith Manasseh had provoked him". Huldah's prophecies were to come to pass regardless of Josiah's efforts to reverse them, because of the evils of Manasseh, 11 Kings 22:16-17. That Josiah worked in the face of that prophecy is a testimony to his character. His love for his people was great despite their unresponsiveness. Ellicott - "The great heat of his wrath wherewith his wrath burnt". (For Jeremiah's comment on Manasseh's evil see Jer.15:4).

V.27 - "And Yahweh said" - Yahweh announced his intention to proceed with his judgements against Judah because of Manasseh. This was done through Jeremiah and Zephaniah. Josiah's work had little effect on the minds of the people - reading the first ten chapters of Jeremiah confirms this.

"I will remove Judah" - Judah was to go into captivity as did Israel. Jerusalem was to be rejected as the place of Yahweh's name. Solomon's temple upon which Yahweh said he would put his name was to be forsaken by him. Lam. 2:8.

V.28 - After this time there remained 13 years of Josiah's reign. This record says that the rest of his acts are recorded in Chronicles - all that record says is "After all this (18th year) when Josiah had prepared the temple". It would appear as though Josiah's last 13 years were spent in concentration on the temple and its services.

### JOSIAH'S DEATH AT MEGIDDO 11 Kings 23:29-30

V.29 - "Pharoah-necho .....went up against Assyria" - The Assyrian empire was on the decline and weakening rapidly. Babylon in the east was growing in power, so Necho with political ambitions in Asia decided on a campaign in political alliance with Assyria against Babylon. See RSV. & page 85. This put Josiah in a position where his independence was seriously threatened; Judah was the buffer state between Assyria and Egypt.

"Josiah went out against him" - The prophecy of 11 Kings 22:20 was about to be fulfilled. By divine manipulation of political events Josiah was virtually forced to go against Necho in battle. In 11 Chron.35:21-22 the record states that Necho sent ambassadors to Josiah to discourage his advance - claiming that God was with him. This is confirmed by the Chronicler v.22. No doubt God was with Necho for a purpose; namely to fulfil Huldah's prophecy; that of removing Josiah and precipitating by political events the eventual overthrow of Judah. Josiah disguised himself and gathered his forces at the Valley of Megiddo - this was on the highway from Egypt through the Carmel range into the valley of Jezreel.

"he slew him" - Chronicles says the Egyptian archers shot at him and he was hit and said to his servants "have me away for I am sore wounded". His servants transferred him to a second chariot and raced towards Jerusalem, but he was dead on arrival.

"when he had seen him" - Roth. "as soon as he saw him".

V.30 - "dead from Megiddo" - This record says that he died at Megiddo and was brought to Jerusalem and buried in his own sepulchre.

### THE NATION MOURNS JOSIAH'S DEATH 11 Chron. 35:24-27

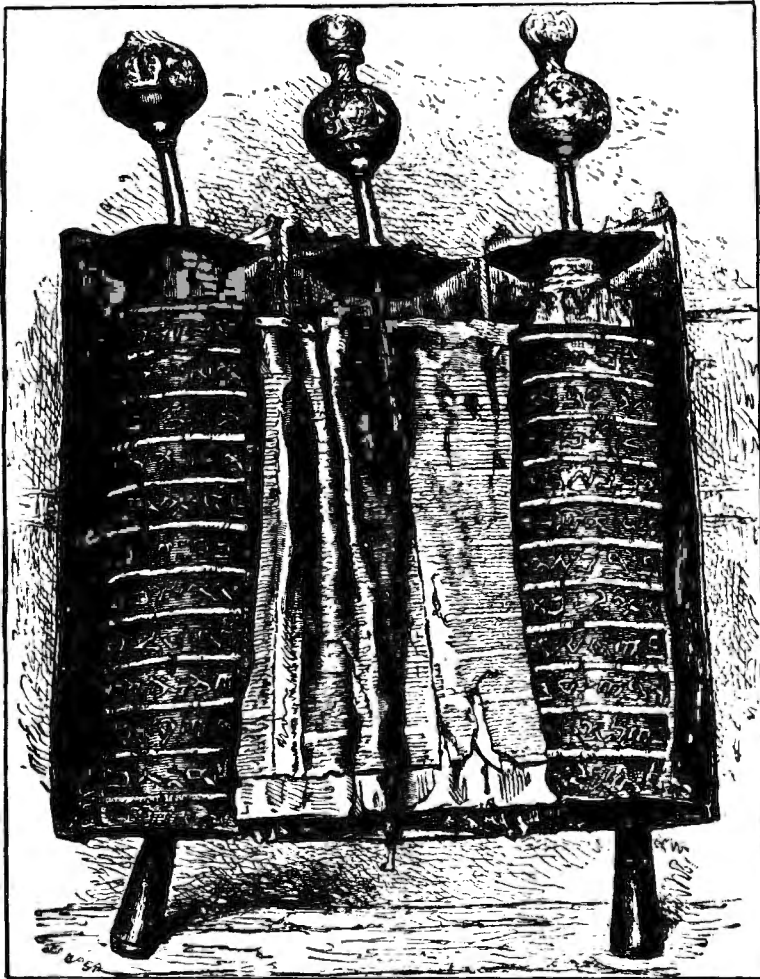
V.24 - "And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah" - Roth. "And all Judah and Jerusalem were mourning over Josiah". This shows that the mourning was spontaneous and genuine. This must be the case, for the spirit chose this mourning to be the type of that which is to come at Christ's manifestation to the remnant of Judah, Zech.12:9-14. Roth. translates "mourning" as wailing in Zech.12. The people of the land knew the goodness of Josiah, and they stood in awe of his singleminded zeal for Yahweh and were prepared to genuinely mourn his death but they did not have the moral courage to cast off the corruptions of Manasseh.

V.25 - "And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah" - QUWN - lament - to strike a musical note, chant or wail. Roth. "And Jeremiah chanted a dirge over Josiah". So deep was Jeremiah's sorrow that he wrote a dirge which was preserved as a national ordinance. This is not a reference to the "Lamentations of Jeremiah" as we know them but nevertheless there are allusions to Josiah in that book, Lam.3:26-27; 4:20.

"in their lamentations" - The dirges composed were compiled into a book and made a national ordinance. This reveals the genuineness of the people's mourning.

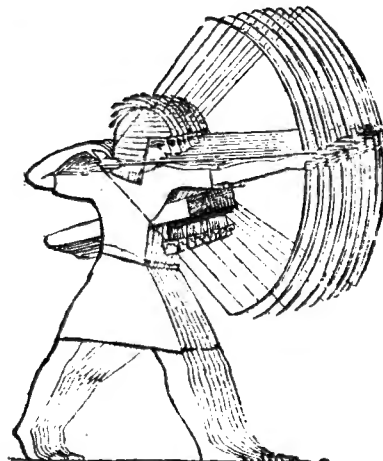


V.26 - "and his goodness, according to .....the law" - This is said of no other king. "Goodness" - Heb. CHESED - a characteristic of Yahweh, Exod.34 :6. Combining this with Jer.22:15-16 we find that Josiah was a full manifestation of Yahweh. He manifested mercy (chesed) and truth (emeth) which are the two essential elements of the divine character; in other words, he was "full of grace and truth".



"And Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it." 11 Kings 22:8.

"And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded."  
11 Chron.35:23.



# JEHOAHAZ - The Preferred

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Yahweh-seized".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 23:30

LAST MENTION - 11 Chron. 36:4

LENGTH OF REIGN - 3 months

During 609 B.C.

AGE AT ACCESSION - 23 years

FATHER - Josiah - "Yahweh his foundation".

MOTHER - Hamutal - "Father in law of dew".

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The reign of Jehoahaz the second eldest son of Josiah was brief. Scarcely had the nation recovered from the shock of Josiah's death and accomplished the installation of Jehoahaz upon the throne before Pharoah-necho returned to Jerusalem to bring Judah under his heel. He obviously did not trust the young king as vassal and took him captive into Egypt, installing in his place his elder brother Jehoiakim.

The fact that the people preferred Jehoahaz the younger to Jehoiakim the eldest son, and the rightful heir to the throne, illustrates that the characters of the two men were well known. Although the reign of Jehoahaz is described as being evil, it is clear that he was preferred to the arrogant and treacherous and tyrannical Jehoiakim. The only indication given of Jehoahaz's character is the divine assessment of his reign; "And he did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh according to all that his fathers had done". From this we may assume that he served false gods and manifested no faith in Yahweh during his brief tenure on the throne.

## HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Installed as king by people aged 23	23:30	36:1-2
Divine estimation of his reign	23:31-32	
Deposed by Necho - Jehoiakim crowned	23:33-34	36:3-4
Death in Egypt	23:34	

## VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

### DEATH OF JOSIAH - ACCESSION OF JEHOAHAZ 11 Kings 23:29-30

V.29 - "went against the king of Assyria" - RSV. "went up to the king of Assyria". Babylon overthrew Ninevah in 612BC and dissolved the Assyrian empire. Necho appears to have gone up to annexe the remnants of Assyria to his empire - the year was 609BC.

V.30 - "the people of the land" - Reminiscent of Josiah's own accession, 11 Kings 21:24. The people did not follow normal convention, but chose Jehoahaz before his elder brother Jehoiakim. Perhaps because Jehoahaz showed more promise than Jehoiakim. This is implied in Jer.22:10-12 where he is called Shallum.

### HIS EVIL REIGN AND EARLY DEMISE 11 Kings 23:31-34

V.31 - "Jeremiah" - "Yah will rise".

"Libnah" - "Whitish tree". A fortress city near Lachish.

V.32 - "fathers" - Plural - certainly does not refer to Josiah.

V.33 - "put him in bands" - RSV. "put him in bonds".

"Riblah" - "to be fruitful, fertile". A place on the source of the Orontes, south of Hamath. Used by Necho and later Nebuchadnezzar as a camping ground and base for military operations. See 11 Kings 25:6-7,20-21.

"Hamath" - "walled".

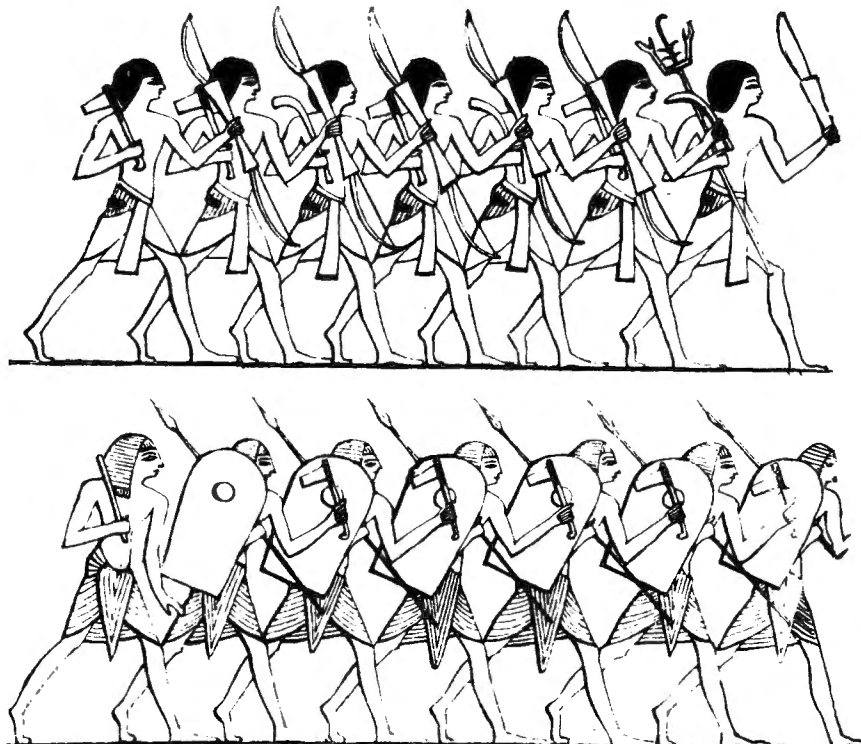
"that he might not reign in Jerusalem" - There is some dispute over the text but RSV. and Roth. support the AV. It appears that Necho sent back to take Jehoahaz prisoner whose reliability as a vassal he probably doubted.

"put the land to tribute" - ONESH - a fine. Roth. "he laid a fine upon the land".

"one hundred talents of silver" - Approx. \$150,000 in today's currency.

"a talent of gold" - \$30,000 in today's currency.

V.34 - "he came to Egypt and died there" - His age at death is not given - see Jeremiah's bleak prophecy, Jer.22:10-12.



EGYPTIAN TROOPS PREPARED FOR BATTLE

# JEHOIAKIM - The Arrogant Tyrant

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Yahweh will raise".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 23:34

LAST MENTION - Dan.1:2

LENGTH OF REIGN - 11 years

From B.C. 608-597

AGE AT ACCESSION - 25 years

FATHER - Josiah - "Yah his foundation".

MOTHER - Zebudah - "Gainfulness" (root, to purchase).

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

As Judah rapidly declined in the face of the growth of Babylon in the east and the territorial ambitions of Pharaoh-necho of Egypt, the eldest son of Josiah came to the throne and hastened Judah's demise by his arrogant and cruel tyranny. Jehoiakim who had been passed over by the people as king was installed as a vassal by Necho in the place of his brother Jehoahaz whose reign lasted only 3 months. Necho required a man who would be prepared to harshly exact from the weakened nation the tribute demanded by him; he needed a man who would impassively bleed the nation dry in order to fulfil the obligations of his vassalage. In Jehoiakim he found that man.

The malevolence of Jehoiakim is highlighted in the record of Kings in two incidents. Firstly there was the harsh exaction of tribute from all the people of the land without consideration of the poor and needy; Secondly there was his treachery in his dealings with Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. However, it is to the prophecy of Jeremiah that we must turn to see the full extent of Jehoiakim's wickedness. In Jer.22 Yahweh condemned Jehoiakim's wickedness for "building his house in unrighteousness". He coveted a spacious palace with luxurious embellishments and in order to obtain it he cruelly exacted unpaid labour from "the poor and needy" and even went to the extent of shedding blood to achieve his ambitions.

Only the influential intervention of Ahikam the son of Shaphan saved Jeremiah from the vengeance of Jehoiakim; Urijah another prophet of Yahweh was not so fortunate and was pursued and viciously murdered by the king for prophesying against Judah as Jeremiah had done. Cruelty, unrighteousness, covetousness and murder were crowned by arrogance towards Yahweh in the matter of the scroll dictated by Jeremiah to Baruch. The picture of Jehoiakim sitting by the fireside nonchalantly slicing pieces from the scroll and casting them into the fire is the complete antithesis of Josiah's reverential trembling as the book of the law was read to him by Shaphan. It was fitting therefore that Jehoiakim should die ignominiously; unlamented by his people and that he should "be buried with the burial of an ass", Jer.22:19.

HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Installed as king by Pharoah-necho	23:34	36:4
Cruelly taxes the people	23:35	
Divine estimation of his reign	23:36-37	36:5
Murders Urijah the prophet		Jer.26:20-24
Becomes a vassal of Nebuchadnezzar	24:1	
Burns Jeremiah's scroll		Jer.36:20-26
Rebels and is attacked from all sides	24:2-4	
Invaded and killed by Nebuchadnezzar		36:6-7
Final summary	24:5-7	36:8

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESINSTALLATION AS KING BY NECHO 11 Kings 23:34-35

V.34 - "Eliakim" - "God of raising", "Whom God sets up". The name was probably suggested by Jehoiakim but its conferment by Necho was a token of Jehoiakim's vassalage - a loss of his and Judah's independence.

V.35 - "taxed the land" - Tribute normally came from the treasuries of the palace or temple. Menahem of Israel under an enormous burden of tribute taxed the wealthy but Jehoiakim heavily taxed rich and poor to his own profit. Josephus summed up his character as "unjust and malignant, neither holy towards God, nor forbearing towards man".

"exacted" - NAGAS - to drive (an animal, workman, debtor) by implication to tax, harass, tyrannize.

ACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Kings 23:36-37

V.36 - "Pedaiah" - "Yah has ransomed".

"Rumah" - "height".

A VASSAL OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR 11 Kings 24:1-4

V.1 - "In his days" - There is some confusion as to dates in this period. Dan. 1:1 states that Nebuchadnezzar invaded in Jehoiakim's 3rd. year - 606 BC but Babylonian records say Nebuchadnezzar did not accede to the throne until 604 BC and that the invasion did not come until 598 BC. Nebuchadnezzar as commander of the Babylonian army defeated Necho at Carchemish in 605 BC.

V.2 - "Yahweh sent" - Not "Nebuchadnezzar sent". This was divine judgement. "bands" - GEDUWD - a crowd (especially soldiers) - guerillas. This resulted in the Rechabites moving into Jerusalem for safety, Jer.35:11.

V.3 - "sins of Manasseh" - He had left indelible marks notwithstanding his personal repentance.

V.4 - "innocent blood" - The blood of saints is precious in God's sight, Psa. 116:15 - for this he could not pardon Manasseh. Amongst those slaughtered by Manasseh was Isaiah the prophet.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S INVASION 11 Chron. 36:5-8

V.6 - "bound him in fetters" - It would appear that Nebuchadnezzar bound

Jehoiakim with a view to taking him to Babylon. Jer.22:18-19 required that he die at Jerusalem with an ignominious death and this doubtless occurred.

V.7 - "the vessels" - Referred to also by Daniel in chapter 1:2.

V.8 - "his abominations....that which was found in him" - These are detailed in Jeremiah and Habakkuk.

### JEHOIAKIM'S CHARACTER REVEALED Jer. 22:13-19

V.13 - "useth his neighbour's service without wages" - He used forced labour to build a new palace - he coveted a spacious and splendid house and was not averse to shedding blood to obtain it, Hab.2:9-11. Compare the law, Lev.19:13.

V.14 - "wide house" - MIDDAH - extension. Roth. "roomy house".  
"large chambers" - RAVACH - to breathe freely, by implication to have ample room. Roth. "spacious roof-chambers". ("chambers" - ALIYAH - second story room ie. stairway, lofty)  
"ceiled" - CAPHAN - to hide by covering, to roof. RSV. "panelling".  
"vermilion" - Red - a colour symbolic of his character (sin).

V.15 - "closest thyself in cedar" - Roth. "because thou art eager to excel in cedar", Luke 12:15.

V.16 - "He judged the cause" - DUWN - to rule, by implication to judge (as umpire), also to strive. Roth. "Did he not plead the cause of the oppressed and needy". In this Josiah was a type of Christ, Psa.72:2,4,12-14.  
"was not this to know me" - Josiah blended mercy with justice and thus manifested Yahweh's character, Mic.6:8.

V.17 - "covetousness" - BETSA - plunder. Roth. "Verily thou hast neither eyes, nor heart, save for thy plundering".  
"violence" - MERUTSAH - oppression, from the root RATSATS - to crack in pieces. Roth. "And for crushing".

V.19 - "burial of an ass" - So hateful was he - no wonder the people chose Jehoahaz before him. Josephus records that Nebuchadnezzar "commanded him to be thrown before the walls without any burial" after killing him.

### THE MURDER OF URIJAH THE PROPHET Jer. 26:20-24

V.20 - "Urijah" - "Flame of Yah" - cp. Jer.20:9.  
"Shemaiah" - "Yah has heard".

V.22 - "Elnathan" - "God is giver", Jer.36:12,25.  
"Achbor" - Root, attaching, a mouse (as nibbling).

### THE BURNING OF THE SCROLL Jer. 36:20-26

V.21 - "Elishama" - "God of hearing". "Jehudi" - "celebrated".

V.24 - "nor rent their garments" - Contrast Josiah, 11 Kings 22:8-11.

V.25 - "Delaiah" - "Yah has delivered". "Gemariah" - "Yah has perfected".

V.26 - "Jerahmeel" - "God will be compassionate".

"Ham-melech" - "the king".

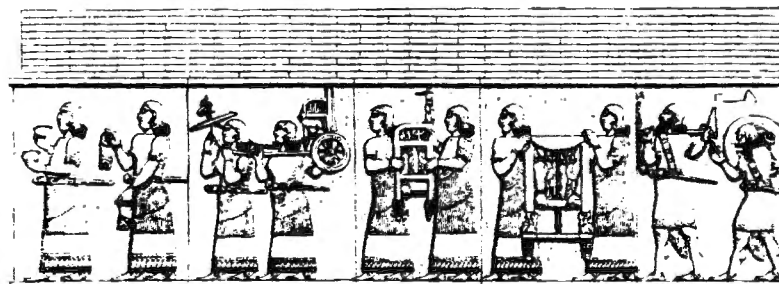
"Azriel" - "Help of God".

"Abdeel" - "Serving God".

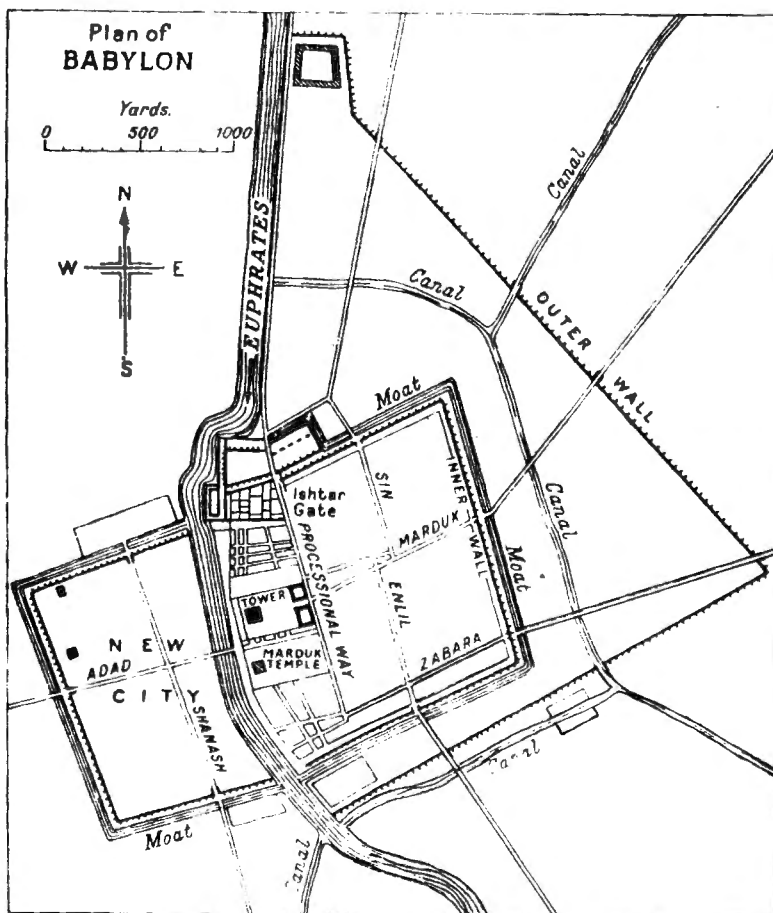
"Seraiah" - "Yah has prevailed".

"Shelemiah" - "Thank-offering of Yah".

"Baruch" - "Blessed".



Bringing tribute



# JEHOIACHIN - The Helpless

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Yahweh will establish".

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 24:6

LAST MENTION - Jer.52:31

LENGTH OF REIGN - 3 months 10 days

During BC. 597

AGE AT ACCESSION - 18 years

FATHER - Jehoiakim - "Yahweh will raise".

MOTHER - Nehushta - "copper".

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The premature death of Jehoiakim allowed only a brief respite from the oppressions of his reign because his eighteen year old son ascended the throne and pursued the same policies as his wicked father. Jehoiachin's occupancy of the throne was short; in 597 BC. Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem and took him captive to Babylon after a reign of only 3 months and 10 days.

The helplessness of Jehoiachin in the face of the Babylonian monarch is indicated by his immediate surrender; "And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers". This captivity effectively denuded Judah of a government and viable economy. The princes, officers and royal servants along with the mighty men of valour and craftsmen were carried away and only "the poorest sort of the people of the land" remained.

It is interesting to reflect that the line of David was carried on through Jehoiachin and not Zedekiah his uncle and successor. Zerubbabel who led the return of the Jews from Babylon was a direct descendant of Jehoiachin, 1 Chron.3:17-19; Hag.1:1; Matt.1:12. In order for this to be accomplished Jehoiachin was released from prison in Babylon by the successor of Nebuchadnezzar and exalted among the captive kings to enjoy the privileges of state. He was not worthy of this special treatment but Yahweh was ordering events to ensure that the line of David was perpetuated until the seed should "come whose right it is" to sit upon David's throne.

## HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF JEHOIACHIN

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Accession at age 18	24:6	36:8
Divine estimation of his reign	24:8-9	36:9
Taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar	24:10-16	36:10
Exalted in Babylon aged 55	Jer.52:31-34	



VERSE BY VERSE NOTES

ACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Kings 24:8-9

V.8 - "Elnathan of Jerusalem" - "God is giver". He may well be the man who features in the shameful actions of Jehoiakim, Jer.26:22; 36:12,25.

THE CAPTIVITY OF JEHOIACHIN 11 Kings 24:10-16

V.12 - "officers" - CARIC - a eunuch.

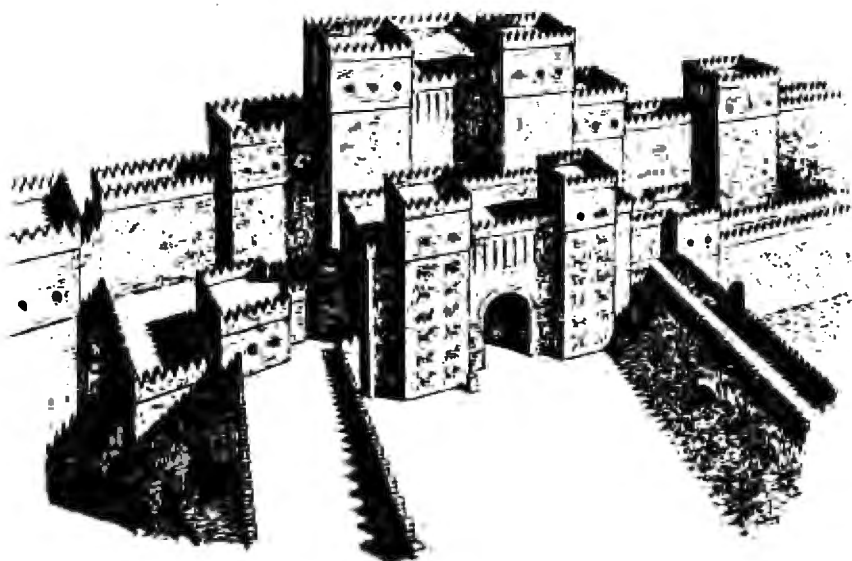
"in the eighth year" - Ie. of Nebuchdnezzar's reign. This was the year 597 BC. and this captivity left Judah only a shell of its former self - the cream of the nation's youth and manpower were taken to Babylon.

JEHOICHIN EXALTED IN BABYLON Jer. 52:31-34

V.31 - "seven and thirtieth year" - He was then 55. (approx. 562 BC.)  
"Evil-Merodach" - "Man (or servant) of the god Marduk". Son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar 562-560 BC.

V.32 - "spake kindly" - TOWB - good. Perhaps this could be related to Daniel's position - Daniel was related to Jehoiachin, Dan.1:3.

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The Ishtar Gate at Babylon: a reconstruction by Koldewey

# ZEDEKIAH - The Profane Rebel

(JUDAH)

HEBREW - "Right of Yah", "Justice of Yah" (Gesen).

FIRST MENTION - 11 Kings 24:17

LAST MENTION - Jer.52:11

LENGTH OF REIGN - 11 years      From B.C. 596-586

AGE AT ACCESSION - 21 years

FATHER - Josiah - "Yah his foundation".

MOTHER - Hamutal - "Father in law of dew".

BROTHERS - Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim.

## SUMMARY OF CHARACTER

The tragic end of Judah which had been temporarily forestalled by the righteous reign of Josiah was hastened by the wickedness of firstly, Jehoiakim and then by his younger brother Zedekiah. "For through the anger of Yahweh it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon:" suggests that Yahweh brought the judgement he proposed for Judah (because of Manasseh's evils) upon the head of these two kings who were equally worthy of it, 11 Kings 24:20.

Though, the account of Zedekiah's reign is brief, a clear picture of his character emerges from the record. He followed the ways of Jehoiakim (11 Kings 24:19) and was as treacherous as his older brother in his dealings with Nebuchadnezzar. A solemn oath of allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar which preceded his installation as king was foolishly broken despite the fact that Nebuchadnezzar "had made him swear by God". Not only was Zedekiah rebellious to an earthly monarch; he also rebelled against Yahweh: "And humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of Yahweh". (11 Chron.36:12). He was stiff-necked and hard-hearted in the face of many appeals to turn back to Yahweh and consequently was an ample type of apostate Judah. (11 Chron.36:13 - Cp. Vv 14-16).

During the persecution of Jeremiah recorded in Jer.38 Zedekiah is revealed also as a weak man who feared his own people and was more concerned with his personal safety than the vindication and preservation of a righteous prophet of Yahweh. The final indictment of Zedekiah summarises in two words the evil of his character; "And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end". Ezek.21:25.

HARMONY OF THE RECORDS OF THE REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH

	<u>11 Kings</u>	<u>11 Chron.</u>
Installed as king by Nebuchadnezzar	24:17	36:10
Divine estimation of his reign	24:18-19	36:11-12
Rebels against Nebuchadnezzar	24:20	36:13
Jerusalem is besieged	25:1-3	
Jerusalem is taken - he flees	25:4	
Is captured and taken to Babylon	25:5-7	
Nebuchadnezzar destroys Jerusalem	25:8-10	
The people are taken into captivity	25:11-12	36:17-20
The temple is sacked	25:13-17	36:18-20
The kingdom of Judah is dissolved	25:18-21	

VERSE BY VERSE NOTESACCESSION AND DIVINE ESTIMATION 11 Kings 24:17-20

V.17 - "Mattaniah" - "Gift of Yah".

"his father's brother" - His half-brother. Roth. "relative".

V.20 - "it came to pass" - RSV. "it came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah, that he cast them out of his presence".

"Zedekiah rebelled" - 11 Chron.36:13 records the perfidy of Zedekiah who having sworn to God before Nebuchadnezzar, went back on his oath and rebelled.

THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM 11 Kings 25:1-3

V.1 - "ninth year" - The year 587 BC.

"forts" - DAYEQ - a battering-tower. Roth. "seige-wall".

V.3 - "the famine prevailed" - Nearly 2 years of seige depleted food stocks to desperation levels. The year was 586 BC. in the fourth month - Jer.39:2.

THE FALL OF JERUSALEM 11 Kings 25:4-7

V.4 - "the city was broken up" - Jer.39:1-3 records the same events but adds the fact that leaders of the army of Nebuchadnezzar come inside the breached walls to the middle gate - Josephus suggests that this was in the temple.

"all men of war fled" - Josephus says the breach was made at midnight - Jer. 39:4 says that the decision to flee was a panic move precipitated by the sight of the Babylonians inside the defences.

"between two walls" - See mention of double walls near the pool of Siloam, Isa.22:11.

"by the kings garden" - In Neh.3:15 this is said to be by the pool of Siloam. The escape route was therefore either via the fountain gate or the dung gate.

"the plain" - ARABAH - a desert. Roth. "waste plain". Descriptive of the wilderness between Jerusalem and the plains of Jericho.

V.5 - "plains of Jericho" - The very place where Israel's history had commenced 1,000 years before under Joshua. The nation's history ended where it had begun.

V.6 - "Riblah" - "to be fruitful, fertile". Near Hamath in Syria. The camping grounds of the Babylonian kings during military campaigns.

"gave judgement" - Roth. "And they pronounced upon him sentence of judgement.

V.7 - "put out the eyes of Zedekiah" - A fulfilment of Jer.34:2-3 & Ezek.12:13. He became literally what he was in fact - "a blind leader of the blind".  
"fettters of brass" - He was bound by a symbol of the flesh - typical of his life.

### HISTORY FROM THE DEATH OF JOSIAH TO THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

- 609 The Assyrian Campaign of Pharoah-Necho - Josiah killed at Megiddo. The accession of Jehoahaz - Jehoahaz deposed by Necho after a reign of 3 months.  
Jehoiakim installed as king by Necho.
- 605 Nebuchadnezzar as commander of the army of Babylon defeats Egyptian army at Carchemish.  
Nabopolassar king of Babylon dies and is succeeded by his son Nebuchadnezzar.  
The first captivity of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (Dan.1:1).
- 601 Nebuchadnezzar receives tribute from Jehoiakim - 11 Kings 24:1-2.
- 597 Nebuchadnezzar overthrows Jehoiakim. Jehoiachin accedes to the throne and is taken into captivity after a reign of 3 months and ten days.  
Zedekiah installed as king by Nebuchadnezzar.
- 588 Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem.
- 586 Jerusalem falls - the temple destroyed.  
Zedekiah captured, blinded and carried into Babylon.



Blinding the Eyes of Captives

## 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.

<u>Study No.</u>	<u>Title</u>
22.	The fall of Athaliah - Rise of Joash - 11 Chron. 23
23.	The failure of Joash - An exhortation to be steadfast and unmovable - 11 Chron. 24:15 - 25:13
24.	The life and Failure of Amaziah - 11 Chron. 25
25.	The life of Uzziah - From prosperity to presumption - 11 Chron. 26
26.	The year that King Uzziah died - 11 Chron. 27
27.	This is that King Ahaz - 11 Chron. 28
28.	He that cometh to God must believe that he is - 11 Kings 16
29.	The end of Israel and a new start for Judah - 11 Kings 17:1-23
30.	Hezekiah's Passover - Judah's greatest special effort - 11 Chron. 30
31.	Hezekiah's reformation - Judah's finest years - 11 Kings 18
32.	The invasion of Sennacherib - Hezekiah's dilemma - 11 Kings 19:1-34
33.	The greatest crisis of Hezekiah's life - who shall declare his generation - Isa. 38
34.	Judah's darkest hour - the reign of Manasseh - 11 Kings 21
35.	Josiah and his companions - a few names which have not defiled their garments - 11 Kings 22
36.	Josiah's reforms - personal triumph - national failure - 11 Kings 22
37.	Josiah's great purge of idolatry and his tragic death - 11 Kings 23
38.	The sad history of the sons of Josiah - 11 Kings 23:31 - 24

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