

Tibni and Omri—A Tale of Two Rival Kings (885n–880n BC)

1 Kings 16:21–22

21 Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri.

22 But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned.

Omri, Commander of the Army, Begins Sole Reign of Israel (880n/880t BC)

1 Kings 16:23–24

23 In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

24 And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria.

The Death of Omri (874n BC)

1 Kings 16:25–28

25 But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that *were* before him.

26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities.

27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he shewed, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

28 So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

Ahab, Omri's son, Assumes the Throne of Israel (874n BC)

1 Kings 16:29

29 And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years.

Asa Develops a Foot Disease (873t BC)

1 Kings 15:23b

23b Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

2 Chronicles 16:12

12 And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease *was* exceeding *great*: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians.

The Death of Asa (871t BC)

1 Kings 15:23a–24

23a The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, *are* they not written in

the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

24 And Asa slept with his fathers,

and was buried with his fathers

in the city of David his father:

and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

2 Chronicles 16:11, 13–14; 17:1

16:11 And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last,

lo, they *are* written in

the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

13 And Asa slept with his fathers,

and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign.

14 And they buried him in his own sepulchers,

which he had made for himself in the city of David,

and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odors

and divers kinds of *spices* prepared by the apothecaries' art:

and they made a very great burning for him.

17:1 And Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead,

and strengthened himself against Israel.

Jehoshaphat, Asa's Son, Begins Sole Reign of Judah (871t/870n BC)

1 Kings 22:41–42

2 Chronicles 20:31

41 And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.
42 Jehoshaphat *was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

31 And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah:
he was thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

Jehoshaphat's Early Reign Marked by Religious Reform (870–868 BC)

1 Kings 22:43, 46

2 Chronicles 17:3–4, 6–9; 20:32–33

Jehoshaphat's Religious Reforms

46 And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.
43a And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD:

Jehoshaphat Orders the Law to be Taught in Judah

Not Everyone Shares Jehoshaphat's Love of Yahweh

43b nevertheless the high places were not taken away; *for* the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.

17:3 And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim;
4 But sought to the *LORD* God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.
6 And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.

20:32 And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD.

17:7 Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, *even* to Benhail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.
8 And with them *he sent* Levites, *even* Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tobadonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests.
9 And they taught in Judah, and *had* the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

20:33 Howbeit the high places were not taken away: *for* as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.

God Rewards Jehoshaphat's Faithfulness (c. 868 – c. 854 BC)

2 Chronicles 17:2, 5, 10–18:1a

God Helps Jehoshaphat Secure His Kingdom

17:2 And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.
5 Therefore the LORD stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honor in abundance.

God Causes the Surrounding Kingdoms to Fear Judah

10 And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that *were* round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.
11 Also *some* of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats.

Jehoshaphat's Wealth and Power Continues to Grow as God Blesses Him

12 And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store.

13 And he had much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valor, *were* in Jerusalem.

14 And these *are* the numbers of them according to the house of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thousands; Adnah the chief, and with him mighty men of valor three hundred thousand.

15 And next to him *was* Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand.

16 And next him *was* Amasiah the son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valor.

17 And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty man of valor, and with him armed men with bow and shield two hundred thousand.

18 And next him *was* Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourscore thousand ready prepared for the war.

19 These waited on the king, beside *those* whom the king put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.

18:1a Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance,

Ahab's Reign Marked by Great Evil (874n – c. 860 BC)

1 Kings 16:30–34

30 And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that *were* before him.

31 And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

33 And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

34 In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest *son* Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun. [cf. [Josh 6:26](#)]

Elijah Proclaims God's Judgment on Ahab (c. 860n BC)

1 Kings 17

Elijah Foretells Drought

1 And Elijah the Tishbite, *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. [[Jam 5:17](#)]

Elijah Fed by Ravens

2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,

3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan.

4 And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan.

6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

The Widow of Zarephath

8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, [cf. [Luke 4:25–26](#)]

9 Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

11 And as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

12 And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

13 And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

14 For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

15 And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat *many* days.

16 *And* the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah.

Widow's Son Raised

17 And it came to pass after these things, *that* the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so

sore, that there was no breath left in him.

18 And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?

19 And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.

20 And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

21 And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

22 And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

23 And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.

24 And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth.

Scripture quotations are from The King James Version (KJV). The KJV is in the public domain.

Chronological Notes

- 1) At first glance the chronology for Omri's reign seems wrong. The text says he ruled twelve years, beginning with Asa's thirty-first year. Asa reigned forty-one years (1 Kgs 15:10), which seems to create a gap of two years. What has occurred, however, is that the twelve years reflects the "coreign" of Tibni and Omri (885n–880n) and the length of time Omri ruled on his own (880n–874n). Thiele states that in this case the author utilizes a dual dating procedure "that is used for all three of the overlapping reigns in Israel and for two in Judah." Thus, Omri comes to power in Asa's twenty-seventh year after Zimri's murder of Elah (1 Kgs 16:15), fights Tibni until the thirty-first year of Asa (1 Kgs 16:23), and dies in Asa's thirty-eighth year, a total of twelve years by the northern means of reckoning reigns.¹
- 2) The text says that Jehoshaphat's reign lasted twenty-five years (1 Kgs 22:42; 2 Chr 20:31). Thiele concludes that this total includes a three-year coregency with Asa (873t–871t) and a five-year coregency with Jehoram (854t–848t). These calculations coordinate the statements about these men's reigns made in 1 Kings 15:24; 22:51–52 and 2 Kings 1:17; 3:1; 8:16–24. They also link their reigns with the northern kings of the same era and perhaps explain who ruled Israel during the disease Asa suffered (2 Chr 16:11–12).²
- 3) The chronology of the stories of Elijah is difficult to reconstruct, but the reference to Jehu and Hazael (1 Kgs 19:15–17) suggests that they were persons already known to Elijah. Jehu, however, did not become king until 841n, twelve years after Ahab's death in 853n, and he reigned for twenty-eight years. It would seem, then, that Elijah's commission came late in Ahab's life. We know also that it came at least four years before the king's death. The basis for this assertion is that the commission was given before Ben-Hadad's siege of Samaria, which in turn was four years before Ahab was slain in the Ramoth Gilead campaign of 853n (1 Kgs 20:1, 26; 22:1). A date of 857 for Elijah's trek to Horeb would appear to be reasonable. Since that journey was after the three-year drought, Elijah must have first encountered Ahab in about 860, fourteen years after he had commenced his reign. This would be ample time for the apostate conditions described in the narrative to have taken firm root.³

¹ Paul R. House, "1, 2 Kings," *NAC*, 202.

² *Ibid*, 242.

³ Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 346.