

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

1 Kings 16:21–22

21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; the *other* half followed Omri.
 22 But the people who followed Omri prevailed over the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. And Tibni died and Omri became king.

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

1 Kings 16:23–24

23 In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel *and reigned* twelve years; he reigned six years at Tirzah.
 24 He bought the hill Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and named the city which he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.

The Death of Omri (874n BC)

1 Kings 16:25–28

25 Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, and acted more wickedly than all who *were* before him.
 26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and in his sins which he made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel with their idols.
 27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did and his might which he showed, 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 became king in his place.

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

1 Kings 16:29

29 Now Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years.

Asa Develops a Foot Disease (873t BC)

1 Kings 15:23b

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

2 Chronicles 16:12

12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet.
 His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.

The Death of Asa (871t BC)

1 Kings 15:23a–24

23a Now 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 place.

2 Chronicles 16:11, 13–14; 17:1

16:11 Now, the acts of Asa from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.
 13 So Asa slept with his fathers, having died in the forty-first year of his reign.
 14 They buried him in his own tomb which he had cut out for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the resting place which he had filled with spices of various kinds blended by the perfumers' art; and they made a very great fire for him.
 17:1 Jehoshaphat his son then became king in his place, and made his position over Israel firm.

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

1 Kings 22:41–42

2 Chronicles 20:31

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

31 Now Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah.

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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 The remnant of the sodomites who remained in the days of his father Asa, he expelled from the land.
43a He walked in all the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD.

Jehoshaphat Orders the Law to be Taught in Judah

Not Everyone Shares Jehoshaphat's Love of Yahweh

43b However, the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places.

17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father David's earlier days and did not seek the Baals,
17:4 but sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did.
17:6 He took great pride in the ways of the LORD and again removed the high places and the Asherim from Judah.

20:32 He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not depart from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD.

17:7 Then in the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah;
17:8 and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tobadonijah, the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests.
17:9 They taught in Judah, *having* the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

20:33 The high places, however, were not removed; the people had not yet directed their hearts to 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 He placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had captured.

5 So the LORD established the kingdom in his control, and all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor.

God Causes the Surrounding Kingdoms to Fear Judah

10 Now the dread of the LORD was on all the kingdoms of the lands which *were* around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat.

11 Some of the Philistines brought gifts and silver as tribute to Jehoshaphat; the Arabians also brought him flocks, 7,700 rams and 7,700 male goats.

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

12 So Jehoshaphat grew greater and greater, and he built fortresses and store cities in Judah.

13 He had large supplies in the cities of Judah, and warriors, valiant men, in Jerusalem.
 14 This was their muster according to their fathers' households: of Judah, commanders of thousands, Adnah *was* the commander, and with him 300,000 valiant warriors;
 15 and next to him *was* Johanan the commander, and with him 280,000;
 16 and next to him Amasiah the son of Zichri, who volunteered for the LORD, and with him 200,000 valiant warriors;
 17 and of Benjamin, Eliada a valiant warrior, and with him 200,000 armed with bow and shield;
 18 and next to him Jehozabad, and with him 180,000 equipped for war.
 19 These are they who served the king, apart from those whom the king put in the fortified cities through all Judah.
 18:1a Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor;

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

1 Kings 16:30–34

30 Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him.
 31 It came about, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went to serve Baal and worshiped him.
 32 So he erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal which he built in Samaria.
 33 Ahab also made the Asherah. Thus Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.
 34 In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the *loss of* Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the *loss of* his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke 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 Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word." [[Jam 5:17](#)]

Elijah Fed by Ravens

2 The word of the LORD came to him, saying,
 3 "Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.
 4 It shall be that you will drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there."
 5 So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.
 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook.
 7 It happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

The Widow of Zarephath

8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, [cf. [Luke 4:25–26](#)]
 9 "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you."
 10 So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, "Please get me a little water in a jar, that I may drink."
 11 As she was going to get *it*, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand."
 12 But she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die."
 13 Then Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake from it first and bring *it* out to me, and afterward you may make *one* for yourself and for your son.
 14 For thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain on the face of the earth.'"
 15 So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for *many* days.
 16 The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through Elijah.

The Widow's Son Raised

17 Now it came about after these things that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became sick; and his sickness was so severe that there was no breath left in him.
 18 So she said to Elijah, "What do I have to do with you, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my iniquity to remembrance and to put my son to death!"

- 19 He said to her, "Give me your son." Then he took him from her bosom and carried him up to the upper room where he was living, and laid him on his own bed.
- 20 He called to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought calamity to the widow with whom I am staying, by causing her son to die?"
- 21 Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and called to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray You, let this child's life return to him."
- 22 The LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child returned to him and he revived.
- 23 Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house and gave him to his mother; and Elijah said, "See, your son is alive."
- 24 Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth."

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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.