

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

1 Kings 16:21–22

21 At that time the people of Israel were divided in their loyalties. Half the people supported Tibni son of Ginath and wanted to make him king; the other half supported Omri.

22 Omri's supporters were stronger than those who supported Tibni son of Ginath. Tibni died; 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's reign over Judah, Omri became king over Israel. He ruled for twelve years, six of them in Tirzah.
24 He purchased the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver. He launched a construction project there and named the city he built after Shemer, the former owner of the hill of Samaria.

The Death of Omri (874n BC)

1 Kings 16:25–28

25 Omri did more evil in the sight of the LORD than all who were before him.

26 He followed in the footsteps of Jeroboam son of Nebat and encouraged Israel to sin; they angered the LORD God of Israel with their worthless idols.

27 The rest of the events of Omri's reign, including his accomplishments and successes, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

28 Omri passed away and was buried in Samaria. His son Ahab replaced him as king.

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

1 Kings 16:29

29 In the thirty-eighth year of Asa's reign over Judah, Omri's son Ahab became king over Israel. Ahab son of Omri ruled over Israel for twenty-two years in Samaria.

Asa Develops a Foot Disease (873t BC)

1 Kings 15:23b

23b Yet when he was very old he developed a foot disease.

2 Chronicles 16:12

12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa developed a foot disease. Though his disease was severe, he did not seek the LORD, but only the doctors.

The Death of Asa (871t BC)

1 Kings 15:23a–24

23a The rest of the events of Asa's reign, including all his successes and accomplishments, as well as a record of the cities he built, are recorded in the scroll called the Annals of the Kings of Judah.

24 Asa passed away and was buried with his ancestors in the city of his ancestor David.

His son Jehoshaphat replaced him as king.

2 Chronicles 16:11, 13–14; 17:1

16:11 The events of Asa's reign, from start to finish,

are recorded in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

13 Asa passed away in the forty-first year of his reign.

14 He was buried in the tomb he had carved out in the City of David. They laid him to rest on a bier covered with spices and assorted mixtures of ointments. They made a huge bonfire to honor him.

17:1 His son Jehoshaphat replaced him as king and solidified his rule over Israel.

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

1 Kings 22:41–42

2 Chronicles 20:31

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

31 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 He removed from the land any male cultic prostitutes who had managed to survive the reign of his father Asa.
 43a He followed in his father Asa's footsteps and was careful to do what the LORD approved.

Jehoshaphat Orders the Law to be Taught in Judah

Not Everyone Shares Jehoshaphat's Love of Yahweh

43b However, the high places were not eliminated; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense on the high places.

17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed in his ancestor David's footsteps at the beginning of his reign. He did not seek the Baals,
 4 but instead sought the God of his ancestors and obeyed his commands, unlike the Israelites.
 6 He was committed to following the LORD; he even removed the high places and Asherah poles from Judah.

20:32 He followed in his father Asa's footsteps and was careful to do what the LORD approved.

17:7 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.

8 They were accompanied by the Levites Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah, and by the priests Elishama and Jehoram.

9 They taught throughout Judah, taking with them the scroll of the law of the LORD. They traveled to all the cities of Judah and taught the people.

20:33 However, the high places were not eliminated; the people were still not devoted to the God of their ancestors.

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 of Judah's fortified cities and posted garrisons throughout the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had seized.

5 The LORD made his kingdom secure; all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he became very wealthy and greatly respected.

God Causes the Surrounding Kingdoms to Fear Judah

10 The LORD put fear into all the kingdoms surrounding Judah; they did not make war with Jehoshaphat.

11 Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat tribute, including a load of silver. The Arabs brought him 7,700 rams and 7,700 goats from their flocks.

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

12 Jehoshaphat's power kept increasing. He built fortresses and storage cities throughout Judah.

13 He had many supplies stored in the cities of Judah and an army of skilled warriors stationed in Jerusalem.

14 These were their divisions by families: There were a thousand officers from Judah. Adnah the commander led 300,000 skilled warriors,

15 Jehochanan the commander led 280,000,
 16 and Amasiah son of Zikri, who volunteered to serve the LORD, led 200,000 skilled warriors.
 17 From Benjamin, Eliada, a skilled warrior, led 200,000 men who were equipped with bows and shields,
 18 and Jehozabad led 180,000 trained warriors.
 19 These were the ones who served the king, besides those whom the king placed in the fortified cities throughout Judah.
 18:1a Jehoshaphat was very wealthy and greatly respected.

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

1 Kings 16:30–34

30 Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the sight of the LORD than all who were before him.
 31 As if following in the sinful footsteps of Jeroboam son of Nebat were not bad enough, he married Jezebel the daughter of King Ethbaal of the Sidonians. Then he worshiped and bowed to Baal.
 32 He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal he had built in Samaria.
 33 Ahab also made an Asherah pole; he did more to anger the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.
 34 During Ahab's reign, Hiel the Bethelite rebuilt Jericho. Abiram, his firstborn son, died when he laid the foundation; Segub, his youngest son, died when he erected its gates, just as the LORD had warned through Joshua son of Nun. [cf. [Josh 6:26](#)]

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

1 Kings 17

Elijah Foretells Drought

1 Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As certainly as the LORD God of Israel lives (whom I serve), there will be no dew or rain in the years ahead unless I give the command." [[Jam 5:17](#)]

Elijah Fed by Ravens

2 The LORD told him:
 3 "Leave here and travel eastward. Hide out in the Kerith Valley near the Jordan.
 4 Drink from the stream; I have already told the ravens to bring you food there."
 5 So he did as the LORD told him; he went and lived in the Kerith Valley near the Jordan.
 6 The ravens would bring him bread and meat each morning and evening, and he would drink from the stream.
 7 After a while, the stream dried up because there had been no rain in the land.

The Widow of Zarephath

8 The LORD told him, [cf. [Luke 4:25–26](#)]
 9 "Get up, go to Zarephath in Sidonian territory, and live there. I have already told a widow who lives there to provide for you."
 10 So he got up and went to Zarephath. When he went through the city gate, there was a widow gathering wood. He called out to her, "Please give me a cup of water, so I can take a drink."
 11 As she went to get it, he called out to her, "Please bring me a piece of bread."
 12 She said, "As certainly as the LORD your God lives, I have no food, except for a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. Right now I am gathering a couple of sticks for a fire. Then I'm going home to make one final meal for my son and myself. After we have eaten that, we will die of starvation."
 13 Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go and do as you planned. But first make a small cake for me and bring it to me; then make something for yourself and your son.
 14 For this is what the LORD God of Israel says, 'The jar of flour will not be empty and the jug of oil will not run out until the day the LORD makes it rain on the surface of the ground.'"
 15 She went and did as Elijah told her; there was always enough food for Elijah and for her and her family.
 16 The jar of flour was never empty and the jug of oil never ran out, just as the LORD had promised through Elijah.

Widow's Son Raised

17 After this the son of the woman who owned the house got sick. His illness was so severe he could no longer breathe.
 18 She asked Elijah, "Why, prophet, have you come to me to confront me with my sin and kill my son?"
 19 He said to her, "Hand me your son." He took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him down on his bed.
 20 Then he called out to the LORD, "O LORD, my God, are you also bringing disaster on this widow I am staying with by killing her son?"
 21 He stretched out over the boy three times and called out to the LORD, "O LORD, my God, please let this boy's breath return to him."

22 The LORD answered Elijah's prayer; the boy's breath returned to him and he lived.

23 Elijah took the boy, brought him down from the upper room to the house, and handed him to his mother. Elijah then said, "See, your son is alive!"

24 The woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a prophet and that the LORD really does speak through you."

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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.