

The Divided Monarchy

932–587 BC

God had told Solomon that his kingdom would be divided after his death. Although Solomon's son Rehoboam attempts to reign over all Israel, God's will cannot be overcome, and Rehoboam retains only the territory of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which become known as the kingdom of Judah. Meanwhile Jeroboam, one of Solomon's former officials, is made king over the northern ten tribes, known as the kingdom of Israel. While Judah will be ruled by only one dynasty for its entire history—the dynasty of David—Israel will be much more politically unstable, going through nine different dynasties during its two centuries.

Israel: Jeroboam to Joram (931–841 BC)

Jeroboam is best known for leading Israel into idolatry by erecting golden calves at Bethel and Dan. His dynasty lasts just two generations. Baasha executes Jeroboam's son Nadab and takes the throne. His dynasty also lasts only two generations, as his son Elah reigns only a short time before being ousted by Zimri, who rules a mere seven days before committing suicide when confronted by Israel's army under the command of Omri. The most prominent dynasty to rule Israel during this period are the Omrides. Its four kings are Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram. The ministries of Elijah and Elisha are conducted mainly during the years of the Omride dynasty.

931–908 BC	Jeroboam and Nadab
908–884 BC	Baasha and Elah
884 BC	Zimri
884–841 BC	Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram

Judah: Rehoboam to Jehoram (932–841 BC)

During the same period that Israel is ruled by the nine kings from Jeroboam to Joram, Judah is ruled by just five kings: Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram. Of these, Asa and his son Jehoshaphat are singled out by the writer of Kings as faithful (1 Kings 15:11; 22:43), while the other kings are not commended in this way.

932–914 BC	Rehoboam
914–911 BC	Abijah
911–870 BC	Asa

870–848 BC ————— Jehoshaphat
 848–841 BC ————— Jehoram

Israel: Jehu to Hoshea (841–723 BC)

The next dynasty of Israel is founded by Jehu and survives the longest: five generations that include the kings Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, and Zechariah. However, Zechariah reigns only six months before being assassinated publicly by Shallum, who in turn reigns only one month. Shallum's assassin Menahem reigns for a decade, and then his son Pekahiah occupies the throne for two years. Pekah appears to come to the throne of a portion of Israel at roughly the same time that Pekahiah began to reign. After a successful conspiracy leads to Pekahiah's murder, Pekah rules all Israel. His reign totals two decades before he falls to a conspiracy led by Hoshea, who reigns for nine years until Samaria is captured by the Assyrian king Shalmaneser. The Assyrians deport the people to several places in Mesopotamia, bringing the kingdom of Israel to an end.

841–752 BC ————— Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam, Zechariah
 752 BC ————— Shallum
 752–739 BC ————— Menahem and Pekahiah
 752–731 BC ————— Pekah
 731–723 BC ————— Hoshea

Judah: Ahaziah to Zedekiah (841–587 BC)

At about the time that Jehu begins his reign over Israel, Ahaziah begins to reign over Judah. Judah has eight kings, Ahaziah to Hezekiah (841–687 BC), during the time of the last ten kings of Israel (Jehu to Hoshea). Of these eight kings of Judah, four are judged by the writer of Kings to be among those who “did what was right in the eyes of the LORD”: Jehoash, Amaziah, Azariah/Uzziah, and Hezekiah. Hezekiah stands out as a particularly faithful king, and we learn about his great Passover celebration and the illness during which he prays for a longer life. Much of Isaiah's prophetic ministry comes during Hezekiah's reign, and the books of Isaiah, 2 Kings, and 2 Chronicles relate various episodes from Hezekiah's life. After the fall of Samaria to Shalmaneser, seven more kings reign over Judah (687–587 BC). Of these only Josiah is said to have done “what is right in the eyes of the LORD.” His refurbishing of the temple and the great Passover celebration he sponsors are given particular attention by the writer of Kings and the Chronicler. However, only twenty-one years after Josiah's death in battle against the Egyptians, Judah falls to the Babylonians under the command of Nebuchadnezzar, and the people of Judah are taken into captivity in Babylon.

814 BC ————— Joash is forced to pay tribute to Hazael of Aram
 740 BC ————— Azariah/Uzziah dies and Isaiah is called to be a prophet

- 716 BC Hezekiah cleanses the temple and celebrates Passover
- 629 BC Josiah purges pagan practice from Judah and Jeremiah is called to be a prophet
- 605 BC Nebuchadnezzar takes the first Judeans into captivity
- early 597 BC Nebuchadnezzar captures Jerusalem a second time
- summer 587 BC Jerusalem falls to Babylon and the temple is destroyed

The Kingdom of Israel Divided

932 BC

723 BC

587 BC

The Kingdom Divides

Assyria Sacks Israel

Babylon Sacks Judah

First Chronicles 3 lists the kings of Judah descended from Solomon, a fitting preparation for the account of the division of his kingdom after his death. First Kings 12 and 2 Chronicles 10–11 relate the disastrous acts of Rehoboam that led to the division of Israel into two kingdoms, with Rehoboam left ruling only the kingdom of Judah. Jeroboam's reign over Israel begins on an ominous note as he immediately encourages idolatry similar to Israel's sin in the desert (see Exodus 32).

1 Chronicles 3:10–16 | 1 Kings 12:1–33; 2 Chronicles 10:1–11:23

1 Chronicles
3:10–16

¹⁰ The son of Solomon was Rehoboam, Abijah his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, ¹¹ Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son, ¹² Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son, ¹³ Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son, ¹⁴ Amon his son, Josiah his son. ¹⁵ The sons of Josiah: Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. ¹⁶ The descendants of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son;

1 Kings
12:1–33

12 Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. ² And as soon as Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from ¹ Egypt. ³ And they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, ⁴ “Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke on us, and we will serve you.” ⁵ He said to them, “Go away for three days, then come again to me.” So the people went away.

⁶ Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, who had stood before Solomon his father while he was yet alive, saying, “How do you advise me to answer this people?” ⁷ And they said to him, “If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them, then they will be your servants forever.” ⁸ But he abandoned the counsel that the old men gave him and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and stood before him. ⁹ And he said to them, “What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father put on us?’” ¹⁰ And the young men who had grown up with him said to him, “Thus shall you speak to this people who said to you, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy,

¹ Septuagint, Vulgate (compare 2 Chronicles 10:2); Hebrew *lived in*