

CHRONOLOGY OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS AND KINGS

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In the preparation of this paper, it was discovered that there is a variation of some fifty years, more or less, in the dates set by various Bible commentators, due to the many factors which enter into Bible chronology. The differences are so minor, however, that they need not cause us any great concern. The majority of evangelical scholars believe that the Kingdom was divided c. 975 B.C. Also, there is practically universal agreement in the dates of the two captivities, which are set by secular history:

- (1) The Assyrian Captivity (722 or 721 B. C.).
- (2) The Babylonian Captivity (587 or 586 B. C.).

The dates mentioned in the paragraph above give us the basis upon which we can arrive at the other dates which are given in the chronology which follows.

With regard to the prophets—we cannot always be dogmatic. They have been placed in relation to the kings either where the Bible indicates, or where it seems most likely that they should be on the basis of evidence given by the prophets in the books which they have written.

Abbreviations: (1) The letter "c." which appears before the dates is from the Latin word, circa, which means, about. Thus, c. 975 B. C. means, about 975 B. C.
(2) Before some of the Scripture references you will find the letters, "cf." This is also from the Latin, and it means to confer, or to compare.

M O N A R C H Y

Saul (c. 1095-1055 B. C.). ~~Our authority for saying that Saul reigned 40 years is Josephus, the Jewish historian (Antiquities, Book VI, p. 204), who records that Saul "reigned eighteen years while Samuel was alive, and after his death two and twenty".~~
Cf. Acts 13:21.

(Line indicates change in dynasty.)

David (c. 1055-1015 B. C.). He began to reign at 30, and reigned 40 years: over Judah, 7 years, 6 months; over Judah and Israel, 33 years (2 Sam. 5:4,5; 1 Kings 2:11; 1 Chron. 29:27). Cf. also 2 Sam. 2:10,11.

Solomon (c. 1015-975 B. C.). He reigned 40 years over all Israel (1 Kings 11:42; 2 Chron. 9:30).

D I V I D E D K I N G D O M

J U D A H (Southern Kingdom -
2 tribes)

I S R A E L (Northern Kingdom -
10 tribes)

Note: There are 38 kings and 1 queen who are recognized as having reigned in the two kingdoms, although there were others who sought to get the thrones from them at various times. Of these 39 rulers (20 in Judah; 19 in Israel), only 8 are said to have done "that which was right in the sight of the Lord". All of the good rulers were in Judah—none in Israel. The names of the good kings are capitalized below.

J U D A H

Rehoboam (c. 975-958 B. C.). He began to reign when he was 41, and he reigned 17 years (1 Kings 14:21; 2 Chron. 12:13).

Abijah (c. 958-955 B. C.). He began to reign in the 18th year of Jeroboam I, and reigned 3 years (1 Kings 15:1,2; 2 Chron. 13:1,2).

Asa (c. 955-914 B. C.). He began to reign in the 20th year of Jeroboam I, and reigned 41 years (1 Kings 15:9,10, 2 Chron. 16:13).

I S R A E L

Jeroboam I (c. 975-954 B. C.). He reigned 22 years (1 Kings 14:20). He was the son of one of Solomon's servants (1 Kings 11:26).

Nadab (c. 954-543 B.C.). He began to reign in the 2nd year of Asa, and reigned 2 years (1 Kings 15:25).

(New dynasty)

I S R A E L

Baasha (c. 953-930 B. C.). He began to reign in the 3rd year of Asa, and reigned 24 years (1 Kings 15:28,33). Re: 2 Chron. 16:1, "the best Biblical critics are agreed in considering this date" (which is different from the one in 1 Kings ("to be calculated from the separation of the kingdoms, and coincident with the sixteenth year of Asa's reign" (Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, Vol. II, p. 536).
Elah (c. 930-929 B. C.). He began to reign in the 26th year of Asa, and reigned 2 years (1 Kings 16:8).

Zimri (c. 929 B. C.). He began to reign in the 27th year of Asa, and reigned 7 days (1 Kings 16:10,15).

Omri (c. 929-918 B. C.). He began to reign in the 31st year of Asa, and reigned 12 years (1 Kings 16:23). Cf. 2 Kings 8:26. The span of four or five years between Zimri and Omri probably indicates the time of dispute between Omri and Tibni over the kingdom.
Ahab (c. 918-897 B. C.). He began to reign in the 38th year of Asa, and reigned 22 years (1 Kings 16:29).

Jehoshaphat (c. 914-889 B. C.). He began to reign in the 4th year of Ahab when he was 35, and reigned 25 years (1 Kings 22:41,42; 2 Chron. 20:31).

Ahaziah (c. 897-896 B. C.). He began to reign in the 17th year of Jehoshaphat, and reigned 2 years (1 Kings 22:51).

Jehoram, or Joram (c. 896-884 B. C.). He began to reign in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat, and reigned 12 years (2 Kings 3:1)

Jehoram (c. 891-884 B. V.). He began to reign in the 5th year of Jehoram (of Israel) when he was 32, and reigned 8 years (2 Kings 8:16, 17; 2 Chron. 21:5; cf. 2 Kings 1:17). He must have been co-regent with Jehoshaphat for two years.

Prophet: Obadiah (?). The date of this prophet is more uncertain than that of any of the other prophets. The dates given range from the reign of Jehoram to the early years of the Babylonian Captivity, that is, either early or very late in the history of the Kingdom of Judah.

Ahaziah (c. 884 B. C.). He began to reign in the 12th year of Jehoram (of Israel) when he was 42 and reigned 1 year (2 Kings 8:25,26; 2 Chron. 22:2).

Athaliah (a woman) - (c. 884-878 B. C.). She began to reign when Jehu killed her son, Ahaziah, and reigned 6 years (2 Kings 11:3; 2 Chron. 22:12).

JOASH or Jehoash (c. 878-839 B. C.). He began to reign in the 7th year of Jehu when he was 7, and reigned 40 years (2 Kings 12:1; 2 Chron. 24:1). He was the son of Ahaziah.

Jehu (c. 884-856 B. C.). He began to reign after he had killed both Jehoram (of Israel) and Ahaziah (of Judah), and reigned 28 years (2 Kings 9:24,27; 10:36).

Prophet: Joel (c. 870 B. C.).

J U D A H

AMAZIAH (c. 839-810 B. C.). He began to reign in the 2nd year of Joash (of Israel) when he was 25, and reigned 29 years (2 Kings 14:1,2; 2 Chron. 25:1).

UZZIAH, or AZARIAH (c. 810-758 B. C.). He began to reign in the 27th year of Jeroboam II when he was 16, and reigned 52 years (2 Kings 15:1,2; 2 Chron. 26:3).

Prophet: Isaiah. He prophesied through the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

JOTHAM (c. 758-742 B. C.). He began to reign in the 2nd year of Pekah when he was 25, and reigned 16 years (2 Kings 15:32,33; 2 Chron. 27:1,9).

Prophet: Micah. He prophesied through the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

Ahaz (c. 742-726 B. C.). He began to reign in the 17th year of Pekah when he was 20, and reigned 16 years (2 Kings 16:1,2; 2 Chron. 28:1).

I S R A E L

Jehoahaz (c. 856-840 B. C.). He began to reign in the 23rd year of Joash, and reigned 17 years (1 Kings 13:1).

Joash, or Jehoash (c. 840-825 B. C.). He began to reign in the 37th year of Joash (of Judah), and reigned 16 years (2 Kings 13:10).

Jeroboam II (c. 825-784 B. C.). He began to reign in the 15th year of Amaziah, and reigned 41 years (2 Kings 14:23).

Prophets: Jonah.
Amos.
Hosea.

Interregnum (11 years, c. 784-773 B. C.).
Zachariah (c. 773 B. C.). He began to reign in the 38th year of Uzziah, and reigned 6 months (2 Kings 15:8)

Shallum (c. 772 B. C.). He began to reign in the 39th year of Uzziah, and reigned 1 month (2 Kings 15:13).

Menahem (c. 772-761 B. C.). He began to reign in the 39th year of Uzziah, and reigned 10 years (2 Kings 15:17).

Pekahiah (c. 761-759 B. C.). He began to reign in the 50th year of Uzziah, and reigned 2 years (2 Kings 15:23).

Pekah (c. 759-739 B. C.). He began to reign in the 52nd year of Uzziah, and reigned 20 years (2 Kings 15:27).

Interregnum (9 years, c. 739-730 B. C.).

Hoshea (c. 730-722 B. C.). He began to reign in the 12th year of Ahaz, and reigned 9 years (2 Kings 17:1).

J U D A HI S R A E L

HEZEKIAH (c. 726-698 B. C.). He began to reign in the 3rd year of Hoshea, when he was 25, and reigned 29 years (2 Kings 18:1,2; 2 Chron. 29:1).

Assyrian Captivity - Fall of Samaria
(c. 722 B. C.).

Manasseh (c. 698-643 B. C.). He began to reign when he was 12, and reigned 55 years (2 Kings 21:1; 2 Chron. 33:1).

Prophet: Nahum (?). This prophet is also without a definite date, but, since he prophesied the destruction of Nineveh, he had to prophesy before 607 B. C. And from the internal evidence (see article in International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia) he could hardly have been earlier than 663 B. C. So Nahum could have written any time from Manasseh's reign to Jehoiakim's.

Amon (c. 643-641 B. C.). He began to reign when he was 22, and reigned 2 years (2 Kings 21:19; 2 Chron. 33:21).

JOSIAH (c. 641-610 B. C.). He began to reign when he was 8, and reigned 31 years (2 Kings 22:1; 2 Chron. 34:1).

Prophets: Zephaniah.
Jeremiah, who continued until after the Babylonian Captivity.

Jehoaahaz (c. 610 B. C.). He began to reign when he was 23, and reigned 3 months (2 Kings 23:31; 2 Chron. 36:2).

Jehoiakim (c. 610-598 B. C.). He began to reign when he was 25, and reigned 11 years (2 Kings 23:36; 2 Chron. 36:5).

Prophet: Habakkuk (?). This is another undated prophecy, but the time is fairly certain, based on internal evidence.

Jehoiachin (c. 598 B. C.). He began to reign when he was 18, and reigned 3 months and 10 days (2 Kings 24:8; 2 Chron. 36:9). In all probability, the difference between these two references regarding the age of Jehoiachin when he began to reign (that is, whether he was "eight" or "eighteen") is due to an omission in 2 Kings 24:8 when it was copied. "Eighteen" is the correct number.

Zedekiah (c. 597-586 B. C.). He began to reign when he was 21, and reigned 11 years (2 Kings 24:18; 2 Chron. 36:11).

Babylonian Captivity - Fall of Jerusalem
(c. 586 B. C.).

Prophets: Jeremiah wrote Lamentations at this time.
Obadiah (?). Many Biblical scholars believe that Obadiah wrote during this period in Judah's history, rather than during the reign of Jehoram (of Judah) as indicated above.
Ezekiel.
Daniel.

Cyrus captured Babylon (c. 538 B. C.).

R E S T O R A T I O N

First return under Zerubbabal (c. 536 B. C.). The temple was rebuilt at this time.

Prophets: Haggai)
Zechariah) (c. 520-518 B. C.).

Second return under Ezra (c. 458 B. C.).

Third return under Nehemiah (c. 455 B. C.).

Prophet: Malachi (c. 433 B. C.).

Conclusion: From this time until the writing of the New Testament, there is no record of a written revelation from God--a little over four hundred silent years!