

RULERS OF JUDAH AND THEIR QUEEN MOTHERS (Gebirah)

from 930BC—587/6BC: one ruling family = the House of David

(dates from New Jerusalem Bible translation)

Do you not know that Yahweh, God of Israel, has given eternal sovereignty of Israel to David and his sons by an inviolable covenant? 2 Chronicles 31:5

RULER & DATE	FATHER & MOTHER	SCRIPTURE
1. Rehoboam 930-913	Son of Solomon Mother: Naamah the Ammonite	1 Kings 11:42-14:31 2 Chronicles 9:31-12:16
2. Abijam (Abijah) 913-911	Son of Rehoboam Mother: Maacah (Micaiah) descendant of David's son Absalom	1 Kings 14:31-15:8 2 Chronicles 13:1-23
3. Asa 911-870	Son of Abijam Gebirah = grandmother Maacah	1 Kings 15:8-24 2 Chronicles 13:23-16:14
4. Jehoshaphat 870-848	Son of Asa Mother: Azubah	1 Kings 15:24' 22"41-51 2 Chronicles 17:1-21:1
5. Jehoram 848-841	Son of Jehoshaphat Mother: ?	2 Kings 8:16-24 2 Chronicles 21:1-20
6. Ahaziah 841	Son of Jehoram Mother: Athaliah	2 Kings 8:24-29; 9:14-26 2 Chronicles 22:1-12
7. Athaliah (Queen Mother) 841-835	Daughter of Ahab and Jezebel of Israel	2 Kings 11L1-20 2 Chronicles 22:1-15
8. Jehoash (Joash) 835-796	Grandson of Athaliah and son of Ahaziah; Mother: Zibiah (Beersheba)	1 Kings 11:1-12:21 2 Chronicles 22:10-23; 24:27
9. Amaziah 796-781	Son of Jehoash Mother: Jehoaddan	2 Kings 14:1-22 2 Chronicles 26:1-23
10. Uzziah 781-740	Son of Amaziah Mother: Jecoliah	2 Kings 15:1-7 2 Chronicles 26:23-27:9
11. Jotham 740-736	Son of Uzziah Mother: Jerushah	2 Kings 15:32-38 2 Chronicles 26:9-27:9
12. Ahaz 736-716	Son of Jotham Mother: ?	2 Kings 15:38-16:20 2 Chronicles 27:9-28:27
13. Hezekiah 716-687	Son of Ahaz Mother: Abijah	2 Kings 16:20; 18:1-20:21 2 Chronicles 28:27-32:33
14. Manasseh 697-642	Son of Hezekiah Mother: Hephzibah	2 Kings 21:1-18 2 Chronicles 32:33-33:20
15. Amon 642-640	Son of Manasseh Mother: Meshullemeth	2 Kings 21:18-26 2 Chronicles 33:20-25
16. Josiah 640-609	Son of Amon Mother: Jedidiah	2 Kings 21:26-23:30 2 Chronicles 33:25-35:27
17. Eliakim/Jehoahaz 609	Son of Josiah Mother: Hamutal	2 Kings 23:30-34 2 Chronicles 36:5-8

18. Jehoiakim 609-598	Brother of Eliakim Mother: Zebidah	2 Kings 23:34-24:6 2 Chronicles 36:5-8
19. Jehoiachin 598-597	Son of Jehoiakim Mother: Nehusta	2 Kings 24:6-17 2 Chronicles 36:8-10
20. Mattaniah/Zedekiah 597-587/6	Parental uncle of Jehoiachin and son of Jehoiakim Mother: Hamital	2 Kings 24:17-25:30 2 Chronicles 36:10-13; Ezekiel 17:13-16

The Gebirah, the Queen Mother of the Kingdom of Judah, was an official position held by the mother of the Davidic kings. She was the most important and influential woman in the royal court and the king's chief counselor. The Hebrew word *gebirah* is found 15 times in the Old Testament and can be translated as "Queen Mother," or "Great Lady" [Genesis 16:4, 8, 9, 1 Kings 11:19 (used for the Egyptian Queen Mother); 15:13; 2 Kings 5:3; 10:13; 2 Chronicles 15:16; Psalm 123:2; Proverbs 30:23; Isaiah 24:2; 47:5, 7; Jeremiah 13:18; 29:2]. In Sacred Scripture the mother of the Davidic king is listed along with her son in the books of 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles when he assumes the throne. The only queen mother not listed are those of King Jehoram, who married wicked Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel of Israel [2 Kings 8:17-18]; King Ahaz [2 Kings 16:2-3]; and King Asa [1 Kings 15:10]. In the case of Jehoram and Ahaz, their mothers may have died prior to their sons assuming the throne of David, and in the case of Asa, his grandmother is named as the *Gebirah*, his mother having died or perhaps his grandmother, the former *Gebirah*, did not relinquish her power and authority upon the succession of her grandson. Scripture indicates that the Gebirah assumed a throne alongside her son [see 1 Kings 2:19] and exercised her role as counselor [2 Chronicles 22:3] and intercessor to the king [1 Kings 2:13-21]. In times of conquest, both the king and his mother represented royal power [2 Kings 24:12]. The Gebirah was clearly the most important woman in the Kingdom of Judah; a king had many wives, but only one mother. The *Gebirah* of the eternal Davidic Kingdom of Jesus Christ is Mary of Nazareth. She appears in this role in Revelation 12:1. The institution of the *Gebirah* was not practiced in the Northern Kingdom. The mothers of those kings are not listed in Scripture.

Resources and suggested reading on the institution of the Gebirah:

1. *Birth of the Messiah*, Father Raymond Brown, New York: Doubleday, 1993.
2. *Ancient Israel*, Father R. De Vaux, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961.
3. *Queen Mother: A Biblical Theology of Mary's Queenship*, Edward Sri, Steubenville, Ohio: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2005.

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A COMPARISON OF THE REIGNS OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL DURING THE PERIOD OF THE DIVIDED MONARCHY	
THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH (Tribes of Judah and Benjamin) 930 – 587/6BC 1 ruling family: the House of David	THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL (10 Northern Tribes) 930 – 722BC 9 ruling families
Rehoboam 931/930 – 913	Jeroboam I 931/930 – 910
Abijam (Abijah) 913 – 911	Nadab 910 – 909
Asa 911 – 870	Baasha 909 – 884
	Elah 886 – 885
	Zimri 885
	Omri 885 – 874
Jehoshaphat 870 – 848	Ahab 874 – 853
	Ahaziah 853 – 852
Jehoram 848 – 841	Jehoram (Joram) 852 – 841
Ahaziah 841	Jehu 841 – 814
Queen Athaliah (daughter of Ahab of Israel) 841 – 835	
Jehoash 835 – 796	Jehoahaz 814 – 798
Amaziah 796-781	Jehoash 798 -783
Uzziah (Azariah) 781 – 740	Jeroboam II 783 – 743
	Zechariah 743
	Shallum 743
Jotham 750 – 736	Menahem 743 – 738
	Pekahiah 738 – 737
Ahaz 736 – 716	Pekah 737 – 732
Hezekiah 716 – 687	Hoshea 732 – 724
Manasseh 687 – 642	Assyrian conquest and fall of Samaria, (capital of Northern Kingdom); 10 tribes taken into exile, 722BC
Amon 642 – 640	5 foreign tribes from the east are moved into the territory of the Northern Kingdom. They will become the Samaritans (2 Kings 17:24)
Josiah 640 – 609	
Jehoahaz 609 (first deportation of exiles to Babylon)	
Jehoiakim 609 – 598	
Jehoiachin 598 – 597 (second deportation of exiles to Babylon 597)	
Zedekiah 598 – 587/6 (third deportation of exiles to Babylon 587/6)	

Babylonian conquest; destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and exile for citizens of Judah, 587/6BC (70 years of exile)	
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All dates are from New Jerusalem Bible; dates may vary according to source.

Archaeological evidence which supports the Biblical record:

1. **The discovery of Pharaoh Siamun's relief:** Pharaoh Siamun, a contemporary of Israel's King Solomon, ordered a triumphal relief commemorating his campaign against the Philistines c. 970-960. The Bible records that a pharaoh conquered the Philistine city of Gezer and gave it as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife in 1 Kings 9:16.

2. **The discovery of Pharaoh Shoshenq's triumphal relief at Karnak and stela at Silisila:** These artifacts commemorate the pharaoh's campaign in Israel 925 and in Judah 924BC during King Rehoboam's reign recorded in 1 Kings 14:25-26; 2 Chronicles 12:1-9.

3. **Annals of Shalmaneser III (853/52):** The Assyrian annals mention King Ahab of Israel by name.

4. **Annals of Shalmaneser III (841/40):** The Assyrian annals mention King Jehu of Israel by name.

SOLVING AN APPARENT DISCREPANCY IN THE BIBLICAL RECORD:

The Assyrian annals put 12 years between King Ahab of Israel and King Jehu. However, the Biblical record records 14 years between the reigns of these two kings with two kings between them—Ahaziah who ruled for two years and Jehoram who ruled 12 years (1 Kings 22:51; 2 Kings 3:1). What at first glance appears to be a discrepancy can be easily explained by historians. Ancient kingdoms had different ways of recording reignal years. The Assyrians and Babylonians credited the entire year when a king died to his reign, even if he died in the beginning of the year and his successor ruled 11 months of that year. That first year for the new king would be designated his "ascension year" and the new king's "Year #1" did not begin until the first day of the following year. Historians call this method the "accession year" system or the "post-dating" system.

Additional resource: see the document in the Documents/ Old Testament section "Dating the Reigns of the Kings of Judah and the Kings of Israel"

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Resources and suggested reading:

1. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, ed., James Pritchard, Princeton University Press, 1950.
2. *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, E.R. Thiele, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986.

3. *The Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah*, Gershon Galil, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996.
4. "How We Know When Solomon Ruled," Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, September/October 2001.