

The Kings of Judah

Selected Scriptures

“Indeed this city has been to Me a provocation of My anger and My wrath from the day that they built it, even to this day, so that it should be removed from before My face, because of all the evil of the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah which they have done to provoke Me to anger—they, their kings, their leaders, their priests, their prophets, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They have turned their back to Me and not their face; though I taught them, teaching again and again, they would not listen and receive instruction. But they put their detestable things in the house which is called by My name, to defile it.”
(Jeremiah 32:31-34)

Introduction:

1. We will rewind the tape and revisit the same Books of the Bible and many of the same chapters (I Kings 15-22), (II Kings 1-25), and (Chronicles 13-36), along with some of the books written by the prophets, (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Obadiah, Joel, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah) in order to understand the kings of the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
2. In this lesson we are going to look at the Southern Kingdom of Judah and here is a little synopsis of what we will cover:
 - After Rehoboam there are 18 kings and 1 Queen who will rule over Judah
 - The period of the time covered here is 913 B.C. to 586 B.C. (Approx. 327 years)
 - Unlike the Northern Kingdom of Israel which had 9 dynasties, the Southern Kingdom of Judah only had one dynasty (bloodline) which began with David.
3. The Southern Kingdom is completely defeated by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

King Abijah

1. Abijah ruled over the Kingdom of Judah for 3 years (913-911 B.C.)
2. Abijah was the 4th king of the house and lineage of David and the 2nd king of the Kingdom of Judah.
 - Abijah's father was Rehoboam
 - Abijah's grandfather was Solomon
 - Abijah's great grandfather was David
3. Some other familial information worth noting
 - Abijah's mother was the granddaughter of Absalom
 - Abijah had a total of 14 wives, 22 sons and 16 daughters
4. **"In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over Judah. He reigned three years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Micaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. Now there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam."**
(II Chronicles 13:1-3)
 - The war that continued with Abijah and Jeroboam was the same civil war that began with Rehoboam and Jeroboam.
 - Although Abijah was not as spiritually devoted to the Lord as was King David, the people of Judah in general had a heart to follow the Lord and this resulted in the Lord giving them the victory over Jeroboam and Israel. (II Chron. 13:13-18)
5. There are very few notable events in Abijah's 3 year reign and the Scriptures tell us that he **walked in the sins of his father - Rehoboam**. (I Kings 15:3)
 - We know that Rehoboam's wife (Abijah's mother) worshipped other pagan gods
 - Rehoboam also participated in idol worship which no doubt influenced Abijah

King Asa

1. King Asa reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for **41** years (911-870 B.C.)
 - He was the son of Abijah and continued the **dynasty** of David
 - During the first **ten** years he enjoyed a time of **peace** with the Northern Kingdom of Israel and also with other neighboring nations.
 - 1) “So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David, and his son Asa became king in his place. The land was undisturbed for ten years during his days.” (II Chronicles 14:1)
 - 2) “Asa did good and right in the sight of the Lord his God, for he removed the foreign altars and high places, tore down the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherim, and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and to observe the law and the commandment. He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah. And the kingdom was undisturbed under him.” (II Chronicles 14:2-5)
 - 3) “He built fortified cities in Judah, since the land was undisturbed, and there was no one at war with him during those years, because the Lord had given him rest.” (II Chronicles 14:6)
2. Asa is considered to be one of the Southern Kingdom of Judah’s **good** kings
 - From a spiritual point of view he destroyed the pagan objects of **worship**
 - From a military standpoint he **refortified** all of the Kingdom of Judah’s defensive posts and borders. (II Chronicles 14:6-10)
 - Because of the radical changes in worship made by Jeroboam and his bent toward idol worship – many of the people of the Northern Kingdom of Israel flocked to the Southern Kingdom of Judah where they could worship the **One True God**.
 - It was King Asa’s desire to **follow** the Lord’s command that brought the Kingdom of Judah under the blessing of the Lord during his reign.

3. King Asa was a man of faith and he set out to guide the people back toward worshipping the One True God and made several reforms:
- “Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the prophet spoke, **he took courage and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim.** He then **restored the altar of the Lord** which was in front of the porch of the Lord. He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who resided with them, for many defected to him from Israel when they saw that **the Lord his God was with him.**” (II Chronicles 15:8-9)
 - “All Judah rejoiced concerning the oath, for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought Him earnestly, and He let them find Him. So the Lord gave them rest on every side.” (II Chronicles 15:15)
 - “He also removed Maacah, the mother of King Asa, from the position of queen mother, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah, and Asa cut down her horrid image, crushed it and burned it at the brook Kidron.” (II Chron. 15:16)
4. These reforms and Asa’s obedience to the Lord brought peace to him and the Southern Kingdom of Judah into the 35th year of his reign. (II Chron. 15:19)
5. During Asa’s reign as King of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, the King of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Baasha) didn’t like the fact that his people (the Northern Tribes of Israel) were defecting to the south. (II Chron. 16:1-6)
- King Baasha of Israel built fortifications to try and stop these defections and it caused war to break out between the Northern and Southern Kingdom.
 - Asa (**to his demise**) entered into a treaty with the King of Aram (Ben-Hadad) and requested that he break his treaty with the Northern Kingdom and invade the North so as to cause King Baasha to defend his northern border which resulted in the weakening of King Baasha’s southern attacks on Judah. (II Chron. 16:5)
6. Although Asa was considered upright, this reliance on a foreign king to assist him showed a lack of trust in the Lord and he will develop a severe foot disease and die.

King Jehoshaphat (873-848 B.C.)

1. King Jehoshaphat reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for **25** years
 - He was the son of Asa and continued the **dynasty** of David
 - He co-reigned with his father Asa for 3 years (973-870 B.C.)
2. King Jehoshaphat was a very **powerful** king (II Chronicles 17)
 - He fortified Judah's **defenses** against Israel in the border towns between their two kingdoms. (II Chronicles 17:1-2)
 - He was a devoted **follower** of the Lord like his father Asa (II Chronicles 17:3-4)
 - He **removed** the shrines and temples to pagan gods from the lands of Judah and pagan worship in Judah was non-existent for most of his reign as king. (17:6)
 - He was blessed by the Lord with great **wealth** and **honor** (II Chronicles 17:5)
 - He sent teachers (Levites, priests and other officials) to go throughout the Southern Kingdom of Judah to properly teach the **Law**. (II Chronicles 17:7-9)
 - The surrounding nations **feared** Jehoshaphat and his Lord (II Chron. 17:10-19)
3. King Jehoshaphat made an **alliance** with King Ahab of the Northern Kingdom of Israel for the purposes of doing battle against the King of Aram. (II Chron. 18)
 - The alliance resulted in a marriage between Jehoshaphat's son **Jehoram** with Ahab and Jezebel's daughter **Athaliah**.
 - This alliance between the two kings was not the best **move** by Jehoshaphat
4. In a battle that was fought between the armies of Jehoshaphat and Ahab against the Arameans, King Ahab was mortally wounded and died and King Jehoshaphat survived but faced severe rebuke from the **prophet Jehu** for making this **unholy** alliance with such a wicked king. II Chronicles 19:1-3)

5. Continued reforms by Jehoshaphat (II Kings 19-20)

- “So Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem and went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and brought them back to the Lord, the God of their fathers.” (II Chronicles 19:4)
- “He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city. He said to the judges; consider what you are doing, **for you do not judge for man but for the Lord** who is with you when you render judgment. **Now then let the fear of the Lord be upon you;** be very careful what you do, **for the Lord our God will have no part in unrighteousness** or partiality or the taking of a bribe.” (II Chronicles 19:5-7)
- “In Jerusalem also Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests, and some of the heads of the fathers’ households of Israel, for the judgment of the Lord and to judge disputes among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Then he charged them saying, **thus you shall do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully and wholeheartedly.**” (II Chronicles 19:8-9)
- “Behold, Amariah the chief priest will be over you in all that pertains to the Lord, and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, in all that pertains to the king. Also the Levites shall be officers before you. Act resolutely, and the Lord be with the upright.” (II Chronicles 19:11)

6. Jehoshaphat and the Southern Kingdom of Judah were attacked on their southeastern border by the **Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites/Edomites.** (II Chronicles 20)

- “Now it came about after this that the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Meunites, came to make war against Jehoshaphat. Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat, saying, a great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, out of Aram and behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar - that is Engedi.” (II Chronicles 20:1-2)
- This prompted Jehoshaphat to call for a national ***fast***; “Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. So Judah gathered together to seek help from the Lord; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the Lord.” (II Chron. 20:3-4)

7. Jehoshaphat makes a passionate appeal to the Lord in prayer:

- “Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord before the new court, and he said, O Lord, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? **And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations?** Power and might are in Your hand so that **no one can stand against You.** (II Chronicles 20:5-6)
- “Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? They have lived in it, and have built You a sanctuary there for Your name, saying, should evil come upon us, the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before You (for Your name is in this house) and cry to You in our distress, and You will hear and deliver us.” (II Chron. 20:7-9)

8. The Lord answers Jehoshaphat’s prayer through Jahaziel the Levitical Priest:

- “Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph; and he said, Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: **thus says the Lord to you, do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God’s.**” (II Chronicles 20:14-15)
- “You need not fight in this battle; station yourselves, **stand and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf,** O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for **the Lord is with you.** Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord, worshiping the Lord.” (II Chronicles 20:17-18)
- The Lord in fact did give the people of the Southern Kingdom of Judah the victory and Jehoshaphat enjoyed peace for a season of time. (II Chronicles 20:30)

9. Toward the end of his reign Jehoshaphat made an alliance with Ahaziah (son of King Ahab) the King of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. This alliance was not wise on Jehoshaphat’s part and the Lord was not pleased (II Chronicles 20:35-37). All in all Jehoshaphat is considered one of the Northern Kingdom of Judah’s good kings.

King Jehoram

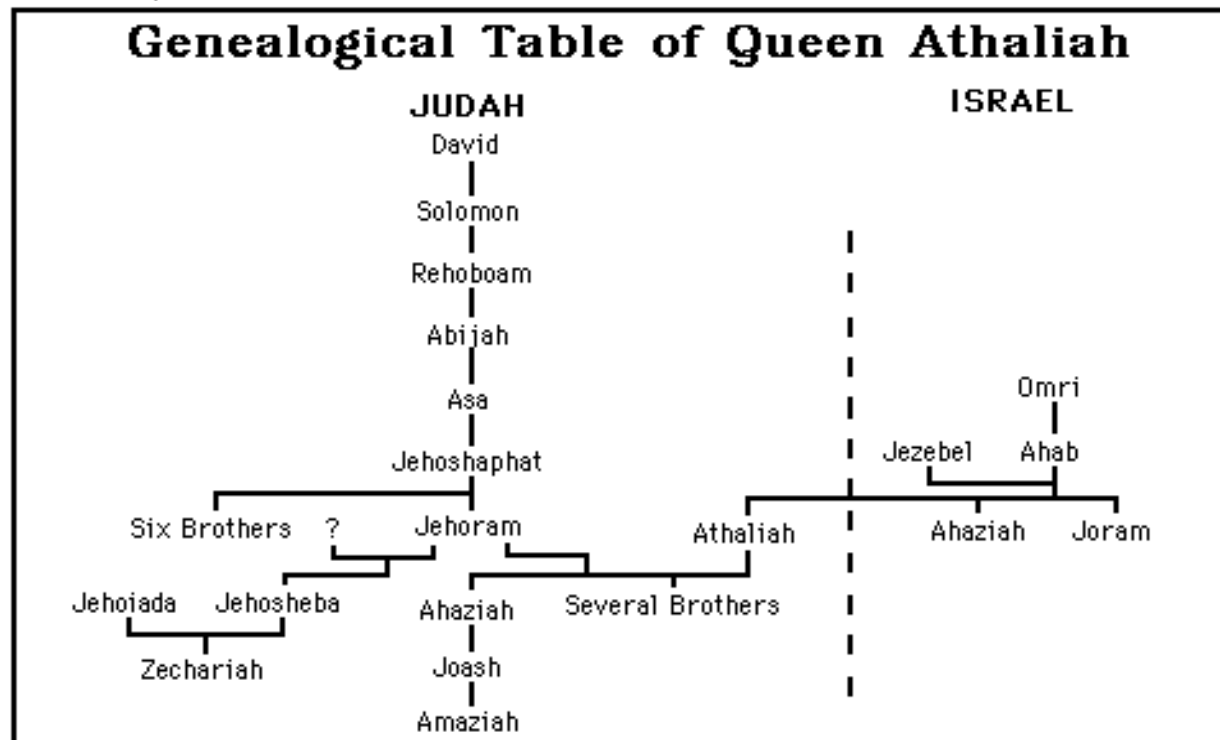
1. King Jehoram reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 8 years (848-841 B.C.)
 - He was the eldest of Jehoshaphat's seven sons
 - Upon the death of Jehoshaphat he took control of the throne and executed all of his other brothers in order to secure control of the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
 - 1) He was married to Athaliah (the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel)
 - 2) He had close ties and alliances with the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the wicked lineage of King Omri and Ahab.
2. "Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab did (for Ahab's daughter was his wife), and he did evil in the sight of the Lord. Yet the Lord was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant which He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and his sons forever. (II Chronicles 21:5-7)
 - Jehoram's wickedness was evidenced in not just his brazen murderous actions against his own brothers but also in his wicked alliances with King Ahab's family.
 - These actions by Jehoram were detestable to the Lord but the grace of God provided a means for David's lineage to continue – it would just take a few twists and turns to get there.
3. Jehoram and the Southern Kingdom of Judah will be at war with the Edomites and other Arab groups during his reign. (II Chronicles 21:8-10)
4. The prophet Elijah pronounces judgment on Jehoram for his actions. He would suffer a severe incurable bowel disease causing him an early death. (II Chron. 21:12-20)
 - The Philistines and Southern Arabians invaded Judah as prophesied by Elijah
 - Upon his death – no one cared and he wasn't even buried with the kings (21:20)

King Ahaziah

1. King Ahaziah reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 1 years (841 B.C)
 - He was King Jehoram's youngest and only surviving son as the rest of Jehoram's sons were killed by the Philistines of Southern Arabia.
 - This Ahaziah is not to be confused with the King Ahaziah of the Northern Kingdom of Israel who reigned from 853-852 B.C.
 - "Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his place, **for the band of men who came with the Arabs to the camp had slain all the older sons. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign.**" (II Chronicles 22:1)
 - King Ahaziah was 22 years old when he began his short reign and his **mother** was Athaliah – the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.
 - 1) "Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah, granddaughter of Omri." (II Chronicles 22:2)
 - 2) "He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly." (II Chronicles 22:3)
 - 3) "He did evil in the sight of the Lord like the house of Ahab, for they were his counselors after the death of his father, to his destruction." (II Chron. 22:4)
2. King Ahaziah will join forces with King Joram of the Northern Kingdom of Israel to go to war against the neighboring Arameans and Joram is wounded in battle.
 - Through a series of events King Ahaziah of the Northern Kingdom of Judah will go and visit King Joram of Israel and ultimately is killed by Jehu - **a fulfillment of the Lord's judgment. (II Chronicles 22:6-9)**
 - Jehu becomes King of Israel and Athaliah will assume the throne of the Southern Kingdom of Judah for a season and attempts to destroy the royal lineage.

Queen Athaliah

1. “When Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she rose and destroyed all the royal offspring.” (II Kings 11:1)
 - Upon the death of her son (Ahaziah), Queen Athaliah took control of the throne of the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
 - 1) She was the daughter of Jezebel and Ahab
 - 2) She was the sister of King Ahaziah and King Joram (*both kings of the Northern Kingdom of Israel who succeeded Ahab*)
 - 3) She was the wife of King Jehoram of the Southern Kingdom of Judah who died of an intestinal illness
 - 4) She was the mother of Ahaziah who succeeded King Jehoram and was killed by Jehu. (II Kings 9:27-29, II Chronicles 22:9)
 - 5) The other sons of Athaliah and Jehoram had been kidnapped and killed by the Philistines. (II Chronicles 22:17)
 - She reigned for 6 years (841-835 B.C.)
2. In order to usurp control of the throne of the Northern Kingdom of Judah, Athaliah attempted to kill all of her grandsons to eliminate the chances of her being removed.
3. A sister (named Jehosheba) of King Ahaziah (thus a daughter of King Jehoram) of Judah took Joash (one of King Ahaziah’s sons) and hid him so that Queen Athaliah could not find him and have him killed. (II Kings 11:2-3)
 - This maintained the royal lineage of David as Joash was the son of Ahaziah
 - Jehoiada (husband to Jehosheba) protected Joash for 6 years until the time was right for him to be crowned as King of Judah. (II Kings 11:4-12)
4. Queen Athaliah was deposed from the throne and put to death (II Kings 11:13-16)



King Joash (835 – 796 B.C.)

1. King Joash reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for **40** years
 - King Joash (also called Jehoash) was **seven** years old when he became the **youngest** king of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. (II Kings 11:21)
 - Upon the death of Athaliah and the coronation of Joash as king – it caused the turmoil that existed in Jerusalem to subside and the city was **quiet** once again.
2. Joash was the only surviving son of King Ahaziah and for the first several years of his reign he was under the tutelage of Jehoiada (the priest who protected him along with his wife Jehosheba – Joash’s aunt) who no doubt **mentored** and **trained** him.
3. The reign of Joash begins an approximate **100 years** (835-735 B.C.) of consecutive rule by 4 kings who were considered as “**good kings**.”
 - This reign of 4 consecutive kings (Joash, Amaziah, Azariah/Uzziah, and Jotham) was the longest continual period in which the kings were “**primarily**” devoted the Lord and provided stable and spiritual guidance to the people.
 - These by far were not the best kings of Judah (though they were better than most), but they did bring a sense of spiritual awakening during their reign.
4. “In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash (Joash) became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem; and his mother’s name was Zibiah of Beersheba. **Jehoash did right in the sight of the Lord all his days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.** Only the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.” (II Kings 12:1-3)
 - Joash ruled the Southern Kingdom of Judah at the same time that King Jehu ruled the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
 - Take note of the reference that says; “**Jehoash did right in the sight of the Lord all his days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him.**” This shows the positive spiritual influence of his uncle upon his life.

5. At some point - probably 20 years into his reign, Joash makes significant restoration and repairs to the Temple built by Solomon:
 - “They gave the money which was weighed out into the hands of those who did the work, who had the oversight of the house of the Lord; and they paid it out to the carpenters and the builders who worked on the house of the Lord; and to the masons and the stonecutters, and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the damages to the house of the Lord, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it.” (II Kings 12:11-12)
 - The repairs were necessary because Queen Athaliah and her cohorts had broken into and looted the Temple using some of the sacred items in the worship of Baal.
 - These restorations to the Temple and the reforms among the priests were driven by Joash but it was probably the spiritual influences of Jehoiada (Joash’s uncle) that caused Joash to make them happen.
6. Jehoiada died, and upon his death Joash began a bit of a downward spiral and the spiritual reforms that were initially implemented by Joash began to crumble.
 - “Now when Jehoiada reached a ripe old age he died; he was one hundred and thirty years old at his death. They buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done well in Israel and to God and His house.” (II Chronicles (24:15-16)
 - “But after the death of Jehoiada the officials of Judah came and bowed down to the king, and the king listened to them. **They abandoned the house of the Lord,** the God of their fathers, and served the Asherim and the idols; so wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their guilt. **Yet He sent prophets to them to bring them back to the Lord; though they testified against them, they would not listen.**” (II Chronicles 24:17-19)
 - Things go from bad to worse and Joash will actually have Jehoiada’s son (Zechariah) killed because he spoke against idol worship. (II Chron. 24:20-22)
7. The Arameans (from the north) will invade Judah and King Joash will be wounded and eventually is killed by his own people for the murder of Zechariah. (24:23-27)

King Amaziah (796-767 B.C.)

1. King Amaziah reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 29 years
 - Amaziah actually reigned for approximately 6 years as sole ruler of the Southern Kingdom of Judah (796-790 B.C.)
 - The balance of his reign as king (790-767 B.C.) he co-ruled with his son Azariah
2. “Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. **He did right in the sight of the Lord, yet not with a whole heart.**” (II Chronicles 25:1-2)
3. One of Amaziah’s first official acts as king was to put to death those responsible for killing his father Joash. (II Chronicles 25:3-4)
4. Amaziah had aspirations of being a “**warrior king**” and set out to build a rather large army of conscripted soldiers (some 300,000 men from Judah).
 - This was done in preparation for a battle with the “men from Seir” which were Edomites who live near the region of the Dead Sea. (II Chronicles 25:11)
 - The men from Judah killed the soldiers of Edom with extreme brutality and nowhere in Scripture does it mention this was the appropriate method or means to accomplish such a victory – but it happened none the less. (II Chron. 25:12-13)
5. Amaziah *grieved* the Lord by **taking the idols** from the land in which he conquered (The people of Seir) and **set them up to be worshipped in the Kingdom of Judah.** (II Chronicles 25:14-16)
6. This action by Amaziah (establishing idol worship in Judah) brought the Lord’s *judgment* upon him and the people of Judah by means of warfare with King Jehoash of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. (II Chronicles 25:17-26)
7. Amaziah became a very unpopular king in Jerusalem and was forced into exile where he was eventually killed by assassins. His son Azariah (**Uzziah**) who co-reigned with Amaziah now ruled as the King of Judah from that point on. (II Chron. 25:27-28)

King Azariah (Uzziah) – (790-739 B.C.)

1. King Azariah (Uzziah) reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 52 year
 - Some translations use the name Azariah and others use Uzziah – they are one and the same person. (Isaiah 1:1, Isaiah 6:1, II Kings 15:1, II Chronicles 26:1)
 - He co-reigned with his father Amaziah from approx. 790 B.C. until 767 B.C. and then began his sole reign as king from approx. 767 B.C. until 750 B.C. and co-reigned with his son Jotham from approx. 750 to 739 B.C.
 - He was **16 years old** when he began his reign (790 B.C.); “And all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the place of his father Amaziah.” (II Chronicles 26:1).
2. “He did right in the sight of the Lord according to all that his father Amaziah had done. He continued to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding through the vision of God; and **as long as he sought the Lord, God prospered him.**” (II Chronicles 26:4-5)
3. The Lord gave King Azariah a number of ***military*** victories:
 - He defeated/conquered several Philistines towns and was successful in defeating several Arab tribes as well. (II Chronicles 26:6-7)
 - The neighboring kingdoms of Egypt and Ammon feared him (II Chronicles 26:8)
4. He was very successful in increasing his military strength as well as fortifying the city of Jerusalem and protecting it from attack:
 - “Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate and at the Valley Gate and at the corner buttress and fortified them.” (II Chronicles 26:9)
 - “In Jerusalem he made engines of war invented by skillful men to be on the towers and on the corners for the purpose of shooting arrows and great stones. Hence his fame spread afar, for he was marvelously helped until he was strong.” (II Chronicles 26:15)

5. It was his pride that got the best of him and this corrupted his heart

- “But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the Lord his God, for he entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense.” (II Chronicles 26:16)

- 1) He became more dependent on his military might than on the Lord
- 2) Entering the temple to burn incense on the altar was a priestly duty and a clear violation of the Law. (II Chronicles 26:16-18, Exodus 30:7-8)
- 3) King Azariah (Uzziah) was confronted by Azariah the priest and 80 other priests, who condemned him (King Uzziah) for his actions. (26:17-18)

- “But Uzziah, with a censer in his hand for burning incense, was enraged; and while he was enraged with the priests, the leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, beside the altar of incense. Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and behold, he was leprous on his forehead; and they hurried him out of there, and he himself also hastened to get out because the Lord had smitten him.” (II Chronicles 26:19-20)

- 1) Take note of Uzziah’s pride which was shown through his anger as he apparently considered himself above the Law; “But Uzziah, with a censer in his hand for burning incense, was enraged”.
- 2) Leprosy made a person ceremonially unclean meaning the person was unqualified to participate in any rituals, ceremonies, festivals etc.
- 3) King Uzziah was under God’s judgment from this point until his death

6. “King Uzziah was a leper to the day of his death; and he lived in a separate house, being a leper, for he was cut off from the house of the Lord. And Jotham his son was over the king’s house judging the people of the land. Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first to last, the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, has written. So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his father’s in the field of the grave which belonged to the kings, for they said, “He is a leper.” And Jotham his son became king in his place.” (II Chronicles 26:21-23)

King Jotham (750-735 B.C.)

1. King Jotham reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 16 year
 - He co-reigned with his father Uzziah for about 11 years – a good portion of that was when Uzziah was incapacitated during the last years of his life due to leprosy.
 - He was sole ruler for about 4 years
 - He also co-reigned with his son (Ahaz) but that is not included in the recorded 16 year reign mentioned in II Kings 15:33.
2. “He did what was right in the sight of the Lord; he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done. Only the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. He built the upper gate of the house of the Lord.” (II Kings 15:34-35)
 - Jotham was considered a good king and he pretty much followed in the spiritual footsteps of his father Uzziah.
 - It was the people of Judah who continued in their improper worship by offering sacrifices and burning incense at locations other than the Temple. In most cases these sacrifices that they were making were made to false gods or idols.
 - King Jotham continued with the fortification of the Temple and outer walls of the city of Jerusalem as well as fortifying the outlying areas in the hills and forests.
3. During his reign King Jotham was at war with the Ammonites and he successfully defeated them. (II Chronicles 27:5)
4. There is nothing negative said about King Jotham and he ended his life and reign with no apparent regret; “So Jotham became mighty because he ordered his ways before the Lord his God. Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, even all his wars and his acts, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Ahaz his son became king in his place.” (II Chronicles 27:6-9)

King Ahaz (732-715 B.C.)

1. King Ahaz reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for **16** year
2. “Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and **he did not do right in the sight of the Lord as David his father had done**. But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel; **he also made molten images for the Baal’s**. Moreover, **he burned incense** in the valley of Ben-hinnom and **burned his sons in fire**, according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had driven out before the sons of Israel. **He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills and under every green tree.** (II Chronicles 28:1-4)
 - Unlike David (his ancestor) he did not walk in the ways of the Lord and here is the list of his evil actions:
 - 1) He made ***idols*** in the form of the pagan god Baal
 - 2) He offered ***sacrifices*** to these pagan gods and he even made ***human*** sacrifices (including his own sons) to these pagan gods
 - He followed the ***evil*** practices of the kings of the Northern Kingdom of Israel
3. “Wherefore, the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Aram; and they defeated him and carried away from him a great number of captives and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who inflicted him with heavy casualties.” (II Chronicles 28:5)
 - His first major defeat came at the hands of the ***Arameans***
 - His second major defeat came at the hands of the armies of ***Israel***
4. Things went from bad to worse as King Ahaz made an ***alliance*** with the king of Assyria (Tiglath-Pileser III) that brought about his demise. (II Chronicles 28:16-21)
5. Ahaz ***robbed*** from the Temple, continued with his sacrifices to ***false*** gods and provoked the ***anger*** of the Lord against him. Upon his death he was buried in Jerusalem but not in the ***tomb*** of the kings. (II Chronicles 28:22-27)

King Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.)

1. King Hezekiah reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for **29** year
 - “Now it came about in the third year of Hoshea, the son of Elah king of Israel that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah became king.” (II Kings 18:1)
 - Hezekiah began his reign during the third year of King Hoshea of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. It would be during the reign of King Hoshea that the Northern Kingdom of Israel is completely defeated by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.
 - “He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem; and his mother’s name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah.” (II Kings 18:2)
2. The prophets ***Micah*** and ***Isaiah*** began their ministry during the reign of Uzziah (Hezekiah’s great-grandfather), continued through the reign of Jotham and Ahaz, and completed their ministry during the reign of Hezekiah.
3. Hezekiah was considered to be one of the good kings of Judah
 - “He did right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.” (II Kings 18:3)
 - “He removed the high places and broke down the sacred pillars and cut down the Asherah. He also broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the sons of Israel burned incense to it; and it was called Nehushtan.” (II Kings 18:4)
 - “He trusted in the Lord, the God of Israel; so that after him there was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among those who were before him. For he clung to the Lord; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses.” (II Kings 18:5-6)
 - There were three other kings who were noted with this same commendation as Hezekiah and they were; ***Asa***, ***Jehoshaphat***, ***Josiah*** (Hezekiah’s great grandson).

4. Hezekiah's Accomplishments

- Hezekiah was successful in defeating the Philistines (II Kings 18:8)
- Hezekiah stood up to the Assyrian's (who had or were in the process of conquering the entire Northern Kingdom of Israel) and completely opposed them in their attempted bid to take over all of the Kingdom of Judah.

- 1) “Now in the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, **Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. At the end of three years they captured it; in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was captured. Then the king of Assyria carried Israel away into exile to Assyria,** and put them in Halah and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, **because they did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, but transgressed His covenant, even all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded; they would neither listen nor do it.”** (II Kings 18:9-12)
- 2) “Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in Judean, saying, hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. **Thus says the king, do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you from my hand;** nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, the Lord will surely deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” (II Kings 18:28-30)
- 3) “**And when King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and entered the house of the Lord.** Then he sent Eliakim who was over the household with Shebna the scribe and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to **Isaiah the prophet** the son of Amoz. They said to him, thus says Hezekiah, ‘This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and rejection; for children have come to birth and there is no strength to deliver. Perhaps the Lord your God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the Lord your God has heard. Therefore, **offer a prayer for the remnant that is left**’” (II Kings 19:1-4)

- Hezekiah's prayer and his consultation with Isaiah the prophet

- 1) "Then Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it, and he went up to the house of the Lord and spread it out before the Lord. Hezekiah prayed before the Lord and said, O Lord, the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. Incline Your ear, O Lord, and hear; open Your eyes, O Lord, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. Now, O Lord our God, I pray, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O Lord, are God. (II Kings 19:14-19)
- 2) "Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah saying, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard you." (II Kings 19:20)
- 3) "Then this shall be the sign for you: you will eat this year what grows of itself, in the second year what springs from the same, and in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant, and out of Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the Lord will perform this." (II Kings 19:29-31)
- 4) "Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, he will not come to this city or shoot an arrow there; and he will not come before it with a shield or throw up a siege ramp against it. By the way that he came, by the same he will return, and he shall not come to this city, declares the Lord. For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David's sake." (II Kings 19:32-34)
- 5) "Then it happened that night that the angel of the Lord went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home, and lived at Nineveh. (II Kings 19:35-36)

5. Hezekiah becomes deathly ill (II Kings 20:1-11)

- “In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him and said to him thus says the Lord, set your house in order, for you shall die and not live.” (II Kings 20:1)
- This illness (probably some type of cancer, ulcer or boil) prompted Hezekiah to pray to the Lord and ask for healing and the Lord not only granted his request but gave him an additional 15 years to live. (II Kings 2:4-6)
 - 1) Hezekiah fervently prayed to the Lord with an appeal that expressed his favorable position with the Lord; “Remember now, O Lord, I beseech You, how I have walked before You in truth and with a whole heart and have done what is good in Your sight. And Hezekiah wept bitterly. (II Kings 20:3)
 - 2) “Return and say to Hezekiah the leader of My people, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of your father David, I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the Lord. I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for My own sake and for My servant David’s sake.’” (II Kings 20:5-6)

6. Hezekiah’s pride (II Kings 20:12-21, Isaiah 39, II Chronicles 32:25-33)

- Sometime after Hezekiah’s recovery from his illness he became prideful in his own personal accomplishments and the in successes of the kingdom.
- In an effort to shore up his defenses against the continual Assyrian attacks, Hezekiah forms a loose alliance with the Babylonians. Part of that alliance involves a meeting in which Hezekiah shows off the wealth of the kingdom which at the very least was a prideful move, but it also invites a future invasion by the Babylonians who will conquer the Southern Kingdom and take those treasures.

7. Hezekiah repents of his actions but that moment of weakness and compromise (II Kings 20:12-13) brings about serious consequences. (II Kings 20:17-18)

8. Hezekiah passes away and will be laid to rest with honor (II Chronicles 32:32-33)

King Manasseh (697-642 B.C.)

1. King Manasseh reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 55 years
 - Manasseh was actually **12 years old** when he began his reign but 11 of those years he co-reigned with his father Hezekiah.
 - Isaiah continued his ministry during this time and also the prophet Nahum spoke to the people of Judah announcing the eventual judgment and subsequent fall of Nineveh (The Assyrians) during the reign of Manasseh.
2. Instead of following in his father's (Hezekiah) footsteps, Manasseh will reinstitute the worship of pagan gods just like his grandfather Ahaz.
3. Manasseh's wickedness was probably the most vile of all the kings (II Kings 21:1-9):
 - He rebuilt the high places to allow free worship to the Canaanite gods
 - He made or allowed to be made those objects, idols and statues that honored the pagan gods of Baal and Asherah.
 - He even built pagan idols and statues and allowed them to be placed in the courtyard of the temple which was reserved for the worship of the One True God.
 - His practiced witchcraft, participated in human sacrifices and even offered his son to the pagan god Molech.
 - He completely disregarded the Law of Moses and led the people of God away from those commandments.
4. The prophet Isaiah spoke against these atrocities which (according to Jewish tradition) infuriated Manasseh so much that he had him sawed in two. (Heb. 11:37)
5. Manasseh was taken captive by the king of Assyria and deported to Babylon where he repents and is allowed to return to Jerusalem. (II Chron. 33:12-18)
6. Manasseh makes changes but it's too little too late (II Chronicles 33:12-20)

King Amon (642-640 B.C.)

1. King Amon reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 2 years
2. Amon was 22 years old when he began his reign (II Chronicles 33:21)
3. There is nothing ***good*** noted about King Amon in the Scriptures and all we are told is that he completely ***forsook*** the Lord:
 - “He did evil in the sight of the Lord as Manasseh his father had done, and Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and he served them.” (II Chronicles 33:22)
 - “Moreover, he did not humble himself before the Lord as his father Manasseh had done, but Amon multiplied guilt.” (II Chronicles 33:23)
4. King Amon was ***assassinated*** by some of his ranking leaders and he was not buried with the rest of the kings of Judah. (II Kings 21:23-26)

King Josiah (640-609)

1. King Josiah reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 31 years
 - He was 8 years old when he began his reign
 - He was noted as one of the Kingdom of Judah’s ***best*** kings
 - During his reign the prophet ***Jeremiah*** will begin his ministry as the Lord’s primary spokesman to the people of the Southern Kingdom. In addition, the prophet ***Zephaniah*** will also speak to the people of Judah about future judgment.
 - During his reign; ***Babylon*** will replace Assyria as the dominant world Empire
2. “Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem; and his mother’s name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. He did right in the sight of the Lord and walked in all the way of his father David, nor did he turn aside to the right or to the left.” (II Kings 2:1-2)

3. Josiah never deviated from his sincere wholehearted **devotion** to the Lord
 - He began to seek after the Lord at the age of **16** and he began his religious reforms at the age of **20**.
 - 1) “For in the **eighth year of his reign** while he was still a youth, **he began to seek the God of his father David**” (II Chronicles 34:3a)
 - 2) “And in **the twelfth year he began to purge** Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images.” (34:3b)
 - Josiah’s passion was so strong that he completely **destroyed** anything associated with pagan worship throughout the Kingdom of Judah (including those lands in the north).
 - During Josiah’s reign the temple fell into **disrepair** and he put a team together to restore and refurbish those areas that had deteriorated. (II Chron. 34:8-13)
4. At some point during the repair of the temple; the High Priest (Hilkiah) discovers the Book of the **Law**. (II Chronicles 34:14-30)
 - It may have been just the book of Deuteronomy or possibly the entire Pentateuch (First 5 Books of the Bible)
 - It’s amazing how far the people and the kings (more specifically Manasseh and Amon) had drifted from the true worship of Jehovah.
 - King Josiah reads the Book of the Covenant (Law) that had been found and does so in the presence of everyone with the intent of **following** its instructions.
5. Josiah removed **idolatry** from the land and re-instituted **true** worship of the Lord
6. “Josiah removed all the abominations from all the lands belonging to the sons of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel to serve the Lord their God. Throughout his lifetime they did not turn from following the Lord God of their fathers.” (II Chronicles 34:33)

7. Josiah reinstitutes the divinely ordered Passover feast (II Kings 23:21-23)
 - It was a very important feast that commemorated their deliverance from Egyptian bondage and the redemption of the Lord's people (The Israelites).
 - This was their oldest feast and it had not been observed since the days of Samuel
8. "Moreover, Josiah removed the mediums and the spiritists and the teraphim and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem that he might confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. **Before him there was no king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.**" (II Kings 23:24-25)
9. The reforms established by Josiah go a long way to prepared the Priests to help guide the people of Israel during their days of future captivity, the days of rebuilding the temple and especially the dark days when the voice of the prophets go silent.
10. Josiah dies in battle
 - After the fall of Nineveh (capital of the Assyrian Empire) in 612 B.C. the Assyrians were at their weakest point and the Babylonians were beginning to make a move in to take over their territory.
 - 1) In the year 609 B.C. the Egyptians planned to come to the aid of the Assyrians in the hopes of keeping the Babylonians from gaining control of their lands.
 - 2) In route to Carchemish (where the battle between Egypt, Assyria and Babylon was to take place), Pharaoh Neco of Egypt will be confronted by Joash (near Megiddo) in battle and Joash is fatally wounded. (II Chron. 35:20-23)
 - Joash is taken back to Jerusalem where he succumbs to his wounds and eventually dies. He is given a royal burial in the tombs of his fathers. (Vs. 24-27)
 - Josiah never faltered from his wholehearted devotion to the Lord and the reforms made by Josiah remained his greatest legacy.

King Jehoahaz (609 B.C.)

1. King Jehoahaz reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 3 months
 - He was Josiah's middle son (age wise) and was chosen by the people to succeed Josiah to rule over the Southern Kingdom of Judah.
 - He was 23 years old when he began his reign and he is noted for doing evil in the sight of the Lord (II Kings 23:32)
2. He is deposed by Pharaoh Neco of Egypt (who temporarily controlled Judah after the death of Josiah) and is replaced by his brother Jehoiakim - Eliakim (II Kings 23:34)

King Jehoiakim (609-598 B.C.)

1. King Jehoiakim reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 11 years
 - He was actually the oldest son of King Josiah
 - Initially he was a puppet of the Pharaoh Neco and actually paid tribute (taxes) to him in exchange for protection from Egypt.
2. He is also noted for doing evil in the sight of the Lord (II Kings 23:37)
3. In 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar defeats the Egyptians at the battle of Carchemish where Babylon becomes the dominant empire of the Near East.
4. Later in that same year (605 B.C.) Nebuchadnezzar invades the lands of Judah and takes some of the key leaders and others (including Daniel the prophet) back to Babylon. (Daniel 1:1-3)
5. Jehoiakim initially submits to Nebuchadnezzar's rule for 3 years and then revolts in the hopes of gaining military aid from Egypt but that failed.
6. Habakkuk and Jeremiah were the prophet during this time
7. Jehoiakim dies in 598 B.C. and is not given a royal burial (Jeremiah 22:18-19)

King Jehoiachin

1. King Jehoiachin reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 3 months
 - He was 18 years old when he began his reign
 - He is noted for doing evil in the sight of the Lord (II Kings 24:9)
 - He was the son of Jehoiakim
2. Jehoiachin surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar; and he along with the queen, other nobles, attendees and officials were deported to Babylon.
 - It was during this time that Nebuchadnezzar took all of the treasures of the temple and brought them back to Babylon.
 - Nebuchadnezzar took the soldiers, craftsman, artisans and others (including the prophet Ezekiel), about 10,000 in all back to Babylon. (II Kings 24:16)
3. None of Jehoiachin's sons would sit on the throne (Jeremiah 22:30) and his uncle Mattaniah (Zedekiah) will be appointed by Nebuchadnezzar to rule in his place.

King Zedekiah (597-586 B.C.)

1. King Zedekiah reigned over the Southern Kingdom of Judah for 11 years
 - He was the youngest of Josiah's three sons who reigned as King of Judah and began his reign at the age of 21.
 - He was personally appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon
2. He was noted for doing evil in the sight of the Lord (II Kings 24:19)
3. Initially he submitted to the authority of Nebuchadnezzar but after continual pressure from the remaining nationalist at home in the land of Judah (Jeremiah 37-38), he rebelled and made alliances with Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt. This brought on the full wrath of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

4. “Now in the ninth year of his reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, camped against it and built a siege wall all around it. **So the city was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.** On the ninth day of the fourth month **the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.**” (II Kings 25:1-3)
 - The siege of **Jerusalem** by the Babylonians began in 588 B.C.
 - The siege was so severe that they basically starved the people of Jerusalem and eventually in 586 B.C. (Zedekiah’s 11th year) Nebuchadnezzar invaded the city and it was eventually destroyed.
5. Nebuchadnezzar captures Zedekiah (who had fled the city), kills all of his sons, rips his eyes out, places him in shackles and deports him to Babylon. (II Kings 25:4-7)
6. Jerusalem is burned, the Temple is destroyed and most all the remaining leaders who were not already deported to Babylon, or who had chosen to flee to Egypt are **executed.** (II Kings 25:8-26)

Closing Remarks

1. It is believed that Jeremiah fled to **Egypt** and was not deported to Babylon
2. The royal lineage does not end with the death of Zedekiah’s sons as Jehoiachin (Zedekiah’s nephew and Josiah’s grandson) will be shown favor by a later Babylonian ruler (Evil-Merodach) who frees him from prison. Some conclude that Jehoiachin repented and followed the Lord (II Kings 25:27-30). Thus the royal lineage continues all the way to **Jesus the Messiah and King.**
3. The Babylonian captivity lasts **70** years and during that time **Daniel** and **Ezekiel** will declare the Word of the Lord to help provide **hope** to the people in exile.
4. At the conclusion of Babylonian captivity the Jews will be permitted to return with the permission of Cyrus of Persia and this effort will be led by Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah. The prophets who are active during the period after exile were Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi and the story continues.....