

*The Divided Kingdom*

ISRAEL	JUDAH	HEBREW PROPHETS
	Rehoboam (922-915)	
Jeroboam I (922-901)	Abijah (915-913)	
	Asa (913-873)	
Nadab (901-900)		
Baasha (900-877)		
Elah (877-876)		
Zimri (876)		
Omri (876-869)	Jehoshaphat (873-849)	
Ahab (869-850)		Elijah (Israel)
Ahaziah (850-849)	Jehoram (849-842)	
Jehoram (849-842)	Ahaziah (842)	Elisha (Israel)
Jehu's Revolt (842)	Athaliah (842-837)	
Jehu (842-815)	Joash (837-800)	
Jehoahaz (815-801)	Amaziah (800-783)	
Jehoash (801-786)		Amos (Israel)
Jeroboam II (786-746)	Uzziah (Azariah) (783-742)	Hosea (Israel)
Zechariah (746-745)		
Shallum (745)	Jotham (742-735)	
Menahem (745-738)		
Pekahiah (738-737)	Ahaz (735-715)	Isaiah (Judah)
Pekah (737-732)		
Hoshea (732-724)		Micah (Judah)
Fall of Israel (722/721)	Hezekiah (715-687)	
	Manasseh (687-642)	
	Amon (642-640)	
	Josiah (640-609)	Jeremiah
	Deuteronomic reforms (621 and following)	Zephaniah Nahum

Table 5.1 (continued)

DATE B.C.E.	MESOPOTAMIA AND EGYPT	ISRAEL	JUDAH	HEBREW PROPHETS
	Fall of Nineveh (612)		Jehoahaz (609)	
	Pharaoh Necho (610-594)		Jehoiakim (609-598/597)	
600	Battle of Carchemish (605)		Jehoiachin (598/597)	Habakkuk
	Growth of Neo-Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar (605-562)		First Babylonian sack of Jerusalem (598/597)	Ezekiel
			Zedekiah (597-587)	Jeremiah taken to Egypt
			Fall of Jerusalem (587)	
			Babylonian captivity (587-538)	

Source: In general, this table follows the dates derived from W. F. Albright, *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*, no. 100 (December 1945), and adopted by John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), pp. 480-481.

*Handwritten note:* Ahab / Elijah

most formidable prophet that Israel has yet produced, **Elijah** the Tishbite, who stages a contest between **Yahweh** and **Baal** on Mount **Carmel** near the Mediterranean coast (1 Kings 18). Despite their ritual antics, the Canaanite priests fail to arouse Baal to action, but Elijah's God sends fire from heaven, consuming the offered sacrifice. Triumphant, Elijah slaughters the priests of Baal and announces that Yahweh is ending the long drought that has afflicted Israel. (Figure 5.7 shows a map of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah during Elijah's time.)

Driven from his homeland by Jezebel's death threats, the solitary prophet—who believes that he is the only person still faithful to Yahweh—retreats to the desert origin of his faith, Horeb/Sinai. Hidden in the same rocky cleft that had once sheltered Moses, Elijah, too, encounters Yahweh—not in wind, earthquake, fire, or other spectacular phenomena, but in the "sound of a gentle breeze" (19:11-12). Yahweh then commissions Elijah to return to the political arena, anointing new leaders who will presumably carry out the divine will more effectively than Ahab: Hazael in Syria, Jehu in Israel, and Elisha in the prophetic realm (19:9-16).

Illustrating the need to replace Ahab, the narrative shifts to describe the king's unjust prosecution of **Naboth**, whose vineyards he covets. Following Jezebel's counsel, Ahab abuses provisions of the Mosaic Law by bribing witnesses falsely to accuse

Naboth of blasphemy, for which he is stoned and his property forfeited to the crown (Ch. 21). When Elijah denounces the king's sin, Ahab repents, causing Yahweh to delay his punishment, though shortly afterward the king is killed at the Battle of Ramoth-gilead (Ch. 22). Not only does Elijah survive his royal prosecutors, whose deaths he helps to hasten, but he soon receives the most spectacular validation of any Israelite prophet—a public ascent to heaven (2 Kings 2:1-12).

**2 Kings**

KEY TOPICS/THEMES

Although 2 Kings originally ended with a celebration of King Josiah's religious reforms, the book was revised to its present form to explain not only why Yahweh permitted the northern kingdom of Israel to suffer annihilation (721 B.C.E.) but also why he consigned Judah to the same fate (587 B.C.E.). By amassing detailed examples of Israelite and Judean rulers' covenant-breaking, the Deuteronomic authors prepare readers for the final catastrophe. The opening narratives review events in the northern kingdom following Ahab's death, which plunges the nation into turmoil and weakness, conditions abetted by Elisha's prophetic backing of Jehu's fratricidal Yahwism and his later