



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

Kings and Prophets Timeline

Understanding Israel, Judah, the Prophets, the Exile, and the Return

The Short Answer

The books of Kings, Chronicles, and the Prophets can feel confusing because many kings, kingdoms, prophets, invasions, and spiritual crises overlap. After Solomon died, the united kingdom divided around 930 BC. The northern kingdom became Israel and the southern kingdom became Judah. God sent prophets to both kingdoms. Israel repeatedly rejected the LORD and fell to Assyria in 722 BC. Judah survived longer, but persistent idolatry and rebellion led to Jerusalem's destruction and the Babylonian exile in 586 BC. Yet exile was not the end. God preserved His people, a remnant returned, Jerusalem and the temple were rebuilt, and the prophets kept pointing toward the coming King from David's line. That promised King is Jesus. The goal is not to memorize every king and date, but to understand the storyline well enough that each king, prophet, book, and major event has a place on the biblical map.

1 Kings 11-12 • 2 Kings 17; 25 • 2 Chronicles 36 • Ezra 1-6 • Isaiah 9:6-7 • Luke 1:32-33

Opening Memory Anchor

The kings changed. The kingdoms fell. God's Word and God's promises remained.



PART ONE

BEGINNER GUIDE

1. WHY CAN THE KINGS AND PROPHETS FEEL SO CONFUSING?

Because several biblical storylines are happening at once. A reader may encounter a king of Israel, a king of Judah, a prophet speaking to one or both kingdoms, a foreign empire such as Assyria or Babylon, events described in both Kings and Chronicles, and a prophetic book addressing circumstances described elsewhere in the Bible. Isaiah, for example, lived during kings described in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles. Hosea and Amos spoke while the northern kingdom still existed. Jeremiah ministered during Judah's final decades. Haggai and Zechariah ministered after the exile. The Bible becomes easier to follow when these books are placed within the same historical storyline.

2. HOW DID ISRAEL END UP WITH TWO KINGDOMS?

Israel's first three kings were Saul, David, and Solomon. David established Jerusalem as Israel's political center, and God promised David an enduring royal future (2 Samuel 7:8-16). Solomon built the temple, but his later years included serious spiritual compromise (1 Kings 11). After Solomon died, Rehoboam rejected the people's request to lighten their burdens. Ten tribes rejected his rule and followed Jeroboam. The kingdom divided (1 Kings 12:1-20).

3. WHAT WERE THE TWO KINGDOMS?

After the division, the northern kingdom was usually called ISRAEL: first king Jeroboam I, capital eventually Samaria, changing dynasties, conquered by Assyria in 722 BC. The southern kingdom was JUDAH: first king after division Rehoboam, capital Jerusalem, royal line the house of David, conquered by Babylon with Jerusalem destroyed in 586 BC. After 1 Kings 12, 'Israel' often means the northern kingdom rather than all twelve tribes together.

4. WHY DID JEROBOAM ESTABLISH NEW WORSHIP CENTERS?

Jeroboam feared that continued worship at Jerusalem's temple might return his people's loyalty to David's house. He established alternative worship centers at Bethel and Dan and made golden calves (1 Kings 12:26-33). This became a defining sin of the northern kingdom. Jeroboam tried to protect his kingdom politically by compromising worship spiritually, and that decision shaped generations.

5. WHAT DID THE PROPHETS DO DURING THE PERIOD OF THE KINGS?

Biblical prophets were God's messengers, not primarily fortune-tellers. They called people back to covenant faithfulness, confronted idolatry and injustice, warned of judgment, encouraged repentance, reminded people of God's promises, and sometimes revealed future events. Kings may tell what happened; the prophets often help explain what those events meant spiritually.

6. WERE ALL THE PROPHETS AUTHORS OF BIBLICAL BOOKS?

No. Important non-writing prophets include Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah, Nathan, Gad, Shemaiah, Azariah son of Oded, Jehu son of Hanani, and Huldah. Prophets associated with biblical books include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. 'Writing' and 'non-writing prophets' are modern study labels, not rankings of inspiration or importance.

Memory Anchor

Biblical books are not always arranged in chronological order.

Memory Anchor

After Solomon: ISRAEL = NORTH. JUDAH = SOUTH.



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7. WHAT IS THE BASIC KINGS AND PROPHETS TIMELINE?

The dates below are approximate. Ancient chronology can involve co-regencies and different systems for counting a king's first year. The purpose is orientation rather than precision down to every disputed year.

ERA / DATE	KINGS	PROPHETS	MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS
UNITED KINGDOM c. 1050-930 BC	Saul · David · Solomon	Samuel · Nathan · Gad · Ahijah	Monarchy begins; David establishes Jerusalem; Solomon builds the temple; Solomon's later idolatry contributes to division.
DIVISION c. 930 BC	ISRAEL: Jeroboam I JUDAH: Rehoboam	Ahijah · Shemaiah	Kingdom divides. Jeroboam establishes rival worship centers at Bethel and Dan.
EARLY DIVIDED KINGDOM c. 930-875 BC	ISRAEL: Jeroboam I · Nadab · Baasha · Elah · Zimri · Omri JUDAH: Rehoboam · Abijah · Asa	Ahijah · Shemaiah · Azariah · Hanani · Jehu son of Hanani	Israel sees dynastic instability. Omri establishes a comparatively strong dynasty and makes Samaria the capital. Judah continues under David's line.
AHAB / ELIJAH ERA c. 875-850 BC	ISRAEL: Ahab · Ahaziah JUDAH: Jehoshaphat · Jehoram	ELIJAH · MICAIAH	Ahab and Jezebel promote Baal worship. Elijah confronts Baal prophets. Naboth is murdered. Jehoshaphat forms dangerous alliances with Ahab's house.
ELISHA / JEHU ERA c. 850-800 BC	ISRAEL: Joram · Jehu · Jehoahaz JUDAH: Jehoram · Ahaziah · Athaliah · Joash	ELISHA · Obadiah? (date debated)	Jehu destroys Ahab's dynasty. Athaliah seizes Judah's throne. Joash is preserved and crowned. Elisha ministers during political upheaval.
JONAH / AMOS / HOSEA ERA c. 800-750 BC	ISRAEL: Jehoash · Jeroboam II JUDAH: Amaziah · Uzziah	JONAH · AMOS · HOSEA begins	Jeroboam II has a long, prosperous reign and recovers territory. Amos condemns injustice and complacency; Hosea exposes spiritual unfaithfulness. Prosperity did not equal God's approval.



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KINGS AND PROPHETS - BIG-PICTURE TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

ERA / DATE	KINGS	PROPHETS	MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS
ISAIAH / MICAH ERA c. 750-700 BC	ISRAEL: Zechariah · Shallum · Menahem · Pekahiah · Pekah · Hosea JUDAH: Uzziah · Jotham · Ahaz · Hezekiah	ISAIAH · MICAH · HOSEA	Assyria dominates. Syro-Ephraimite crisis pressures Ahaz. Samaria falls in 722 BC. Jerusalem later survives Assyrian threat under Hezekiah.
AFTER ISRAEL FALLS c. 700-640 BC	JUDAH: Hezekiah · Manasseh · Amon	Isaiah overlaps earlier · NAHUM	No independent northern kingdom remains. Manasseh leads Judah into severe idolatry and bloodshed. Nahum announces judgment on Nineveh.
JOSIAH / FINAL JUDAH c. 640-586 BC	JUDAH: Josiah · Jehoahaz · Jehoiakim · Jehoiachin · Zedekiah	ZEPHANIAH · JEREMIAH · HULDAH · HABAKKUK	Josiah reforms. Babylon replaces Assyria. Deportations begin before Jerusalem's final destruction. Jerusalem and temple fall in 586 BC.
EXILE c. 605/597-539 BC	No Davidic king rules from Jerusalem	JEREMIAH · EZEKIEL · DANIEL	Babylon deports Judeans in stages. Daniel reflects an early deportation; major deportation in 597; Jerusalem destroyed 586. God has not abandoned His covenant purposes.
RETURN FROM EXILE 539/538 BC onward	Leaders: Zerubbabel · Joshua · Ezra · Nehemiah	HAGGAI · ZECHARIAH	Persia conquers Babylon. Cyrus permits return. Temple and later Jerusalem walls rebuilt. Restoration is real but incomplete.
LATER POST-EXILIC 5th century BC approx.	Persian period	MALACHI	Malachi confronts corrupt worship, unfaithful priests, covenant failures, and complacency. God's people still wait for promised intervention and messenger.

8. WHY DID THE NORTHERN KINGDOM HAVE SO MANY DIFFERENT DYNASTIES?

Unlike Judah, Israel did not maintain one continuous royal family. Kings and dynasties were repeatedly overthrown. Omri stands out because he established a comparatively durable dynasty and made Samaria the capital; his son Ahab became one of Israel's most infamous kings. God had made a covenant with David concerning his royal house (2 Samuel 7:8-16), but the northern kingdom had no equivalent promise establishing one permanent dynasty.

9. WERE ALL THE KINGS OF ISRAEL EVIL?

Kings evaluates every ruler of the northern kingdom negatively in relation to covenant faithfulness. Some were politically strong. Jeroboam II presided over territorial recovery and prosperity, yet Amos and Hosea show that outward success existed alongside injustice, idolatry, complacency, and covenant unfaithfulness. Political and economic success are not the same as spiritual faithfulness.

10. WERE ALL THE KINGS OF JUDAH GOOD?

No. More faithful kings include Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, but even good kings were imperfect. Jehoshaphat made dangerous alliances; Hezekiah showed pride; Josiah's reforms could not permanently transform the nation's heart. Other kings, such as Manasseh, led Judah deeply into evil. God preserved David's royal line while repeatedly disciplining that dynasty for sin.

Memory Anchor

A 'good king' was still not the perfect King God's people needed.



11. WHY DID ISRAEL FALL TO ASSYRIA?

Read 2 Kings 17. Israel's fall is not presented merely as Assyria having a stronger military. Israel worshiped other gods, adopted pagan practices, rejected God's commands, built high places and idols, refused to listen to God's prophets, and persisted in covenant rebellion. In 722 BC Samaria fell and the northern kingdom ceased to exist as an independent kingdom.

12. WHY DID JUDAH SURVIVE LONGER?

Judah had periods of genuine reform under kings such as Hezekiah and Josiah. God also remained faithful to His covenant purposes involving David's house and Jerusalem. But Judah's survival did not mean spiritual safety. Jeremiah warned people not to assume the temple guaranteed protection while they continued in rebellion (Jeremiah 7). Religious privilege does not make sin harmless.

13. WHAT HAPPENED IN 586 BC?

Babylon's domination developed over time. Daniel 1 reflects an earlier stage; in 597 BC King Jehoiachin and many others were deported, and Ezekiel later ministered among exiles. In 586 BC Babylon decisively captured Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, ended Judah's remaining political independence, captured Zedekiah, and deported many more people (2 Kings 25; 2 Chronicles 36). The king was gone, the city ruined, the temple destroyed, and the people exiled. Yet judgment was not the end of the story.

WHAT ABOUT THE "TEN LOST TRIBES"?

The phrase can oversimplify history. Assyria deported many northerners and resettled populations, but not every northern Israelite disappeared. Some remained in the land; others had already moved into Judah. The northern kingdom disappeared as an independent political state, but its people did not simply vanish.

PART TWO

WANT TO GO DEEPER? · INTERMEDIATE

14. WHY DO KINGS AND CHRONICLES SOMETIMES COVER THE SAME EVENTS?

Kings and Chronicles overlap substantially, especially in Judah's monarchy, but emphasize different aspects. Kings gives extensive attention to both Israel and Judah and explains the road to exile. Chronicles focuses more on David's dynasty, Judah, the temple, priests, worship, and covenant faithfulness, speaking to readers looking back after exile. Different emphasis does not automatically mean contradiction.

15. WHY DO THE DATES OF SOME KINGS SEEM TO VARY BETWEEN TIMELINES?

Ancient chronology can involve co-regencies, different ways of counting a king's first partial year, different Israelite and Judean systems of reckoning regnal years, and scholarly differences in reconstructing overlaps. Reputable timelines may differ by a few years while the major historical sequence remains clear.

16. WHY ARE SOME PROPHETS HARD TO DATE?

Some books name the ruling kings: Isaiah 1:1, Hosea 1:1, Amos 1:1. Haggai gives highly specific dates. Other books provide fewer chronological clues. Joel and Obadiah are notable examples whose dates are debated. Where Scripture does not establish an exact date confidently, the safest approach is to acknowledge uncertainty rather than force a slot.

BIBLICAL LITERACY SAFEGUARD

Approximate dates help locate biblical events. They are study tools - not the message of Scripture.



17. HOW DO THE PROPHETS FIT INTO THE HISTORICAL BOOKS?

Think of Kings and Chronicles as much of the historical framework, then place prophets inside it: AHAB -> Elijah and Micaiah; JORAM/JEHU -> Elisha; JEROBOAM II -> Jonah, Amos, Hosea; UZZIAH/JOTHAM/AHAZ/HEZEKIAH -> Isaiah and Micah; JOSIAH -> Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Huldah; JUDAH'S FINAL KINGS -> Jeremiah, Habakkuk; EXILE -> Ezekiel, Daniel; RETURN/TEMPLE REBUILDING -> Haggai, Zechariah; POST-EXILIC COMMUNITY -> Malachi. Joel and Obadiah are intentionally not assigned a precise slot because their dates remain debated.

18. WHY DID GOD KEEP SENDING PROPHETS IF THE PEOPLE KEPT REFUSING TO LISTEN?

Because judgment was not impulsive. Second Chronicles 36:15-16 says God sent messengers again and again because He had compassion on His people. The prophets reveal both God's holiness and His patience. He called people to repent, exposed deception, and appealed to them to return. Delayed judgment should never be mistaken for approval.

19. WHY DID GOD ALLOW FOREIGN EMPIRES TO CONQUER HIS PEOPLE?

Isaiah 10:5-19 and Habakkuk 1-2 show Assyria and Babylon within God's sovereignty, yet God did not morally approve their arrogance or violence. Isaiah condemns Assyria's pride, and Habakkuk hears that Babylon itself will face judgment. God can sovereignly use human actions without approving every motive or deed involved.

20. DID THE EXILE MEAN GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID HAD FAILED?

It could have looked that way. No Davidic king ruled from Jerusalem and the temple was destroyed. Yet prophets continued speaking of a future Davidic ruler: Isaiah 9:7, Jeremiah 23:5-6, Ezekiel 34:23-24. The monarchy demonstrated that even David's descendants could not permanently solve human sin. God's people needed a greater King.

21. WHAT HAPPENED AFTER BABYLON?

Persia conquered Babylon in 539 BC. Cyrus then permitted Jewish exiles to return and rebuild the temple (Ezra 1). Jeremiah had spoken of seventy years of Babylonian domination (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10). Interpreters differ somewhat on precise starting and ending points - first domination/deportation, Jerusalem's destruction, Cyrus's decree, or temple completion - but the central point is clear: Babylon's domination was limited by God and exile would not last forever. The return came in stages under leaders including Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Yet the glorious Davidic kingdom was not restored; the people remained under foreign rule.

BIBLICAL LITERACY NOTE

The 'seventy years' communicate a real period of Babylonian domination and promised restoration. Christians should be cautious about insisting that only one chronological calculation is possible when interpreters differ on the precise beginning and ending points.



22. WHAT DID HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH SAY AFTER THE EXILE?

Haggai and Zechariah ministered while the returned community struggled to rebuild. Haggai confronted people preoccupied with their own houses while God's temple remained unfinished (Haggai 1). Zechariah called the people to return to the LORD (Zechariah 1:1-6) and also looked ahead to a coming King, a humble King riding on a donkey, a pierced figure, cleansing from sin, and the LORD's future reign (Zechariah 9:9; 12:10; 13:1; 14).

23. WHERE DOES MALACHI FIT?

Malachi belongs to the post-exilic world. The temple, sacrifices, and priesthood existed again, but spiritual renewal was incomplete. Malachi confronts careless worship, corrupt priesthood, covenant unfaithfulness, social injustice, and spiritual cynicism. The book closes with expectation: a messenger will come (Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6). God's people are still waiting for purification, restoration, the promised King, and the LORD's decisive intervention.

24. HOW DOES THE KINGS AND PROPHETS TIMELINE POINT TO JESUS?

The timeline exposes a repeated problem: Israel needed faithful leadership, but king after king failed. Even the best were incomplete. The northern kingdom collapsed; Judah went into exile; after the return no restored Davidic monarchy ruled Jerusalem. Yet God's promise remained. Matthew opens, 'Jesus the Messiah the son of David' (Matthew 1:1). Gabriel says God will give Jesus David's throne and 'His kingdom will never end' (Luke 1:32-33). The kings create the question: Where is the faithful King? The prophets create the expectation: God is sending Him. The Gospel announces: He has come.

25. DOES JESUS SIMPLY CONTINUE THE OLD MONARCHY?

Jesus fulfills the Davidic hope, but His kingdom is greater than an ordinary political restoration. He tells Pilate, 'My kingdom is not of this world' (John 18:36). Its origin, authority, and method are not merely earthly. Jesus conquers through death and resurrection, gathers people from every nation, forgives sin, defeats death, reigns at God's right hand, and will finally reign over all creation. The Old Testament kings were temporary. Jesus is eternal.

Memory Anchor

The failed kings created the question. The prophets kept alive the promise. Jesus is the King they were waiting for.

THE GOSPEL IN THE KINGS AND PROPHETS TIMELINE

The history of Israel's kings could be summarized as a search for faithful leadership. God's people wanted a king. God gave them kings. But kings could not fix the human heart. The northern kingdom rejected God and disappeared as an independent kingdom. Judah possessed the temple and Davidic dynasty, yet Judah also rebelled. Prophets warned. Kings died. Empires rose and fell. Jerusalem burned. The people went into exile.

Yet God did not abandon His promises. He preserved His people, brought a remnant home, preserved David's line, and kept promising a coming King. Jesus came from David's line to solve a problem deeper than foreign occupation. Sin separates humanity from God. Every human ruler shares the fallen condition of the people being ruled. Jesus does not. He is the righteous King. He lived without sin, died for sinners, rose from the dead, and reigns.

The timeline therefore leads beyond Saul, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Josiah, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Jerusalem. It leads to Jesus. The kings show why another human ruler is not enough. The prophets announce that God will act. The Gospel reveals the King.

Gospel Memory Anchor

Kingdoms rose. Kingdoms fell. God's promised King came.



PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

1. READ THE HISTORICAL BOOKS AND PROPHETS TOGETHER. When reading Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Amos, or another prophet, identify the historical period in which that prophet spoke.
2. ASK WHICH KINGDOM IS IN VIEW. After 1 Kings 12, determine whether a passage concerns northern Israel, southern Judah, or both.
3. WATCH FOR GOD'S WARNINGS. The prophets demonstrate God's patience in repeatedly calling people to repentance.
4. DO NOT EQUATE VISIBLE SUCCESS WITH SPIRITUAL FAITHFULNESS. Jeroboam II is an especially clear example. God evaluated rulers by faithfulness, not popularity, wealth, territory, or military strength.
5. LEARN FROM BOTH GOOD AND BAD KINGS. Faithful actions matter. So do compromises. Even the better kings remind readers that humanity needs a perfect King.
6. REMEMBER THE PURPOSE OF BIBLICAL JUDGMENT. Assyria and Babylon did not surprise God. Exile came after repeated warnings and persistent rebellion.
7. NOTICE GOD'S FAITHFULNESS ACROSS GENERATIONS. Human rulers changed constantly. God's covenant purposes remained.
8. USE DATES AS LANDMARKS, NOT AS THE MAIN POINT. Knowing approximately when something happened can clarify Scripture. Memorizing every disputed date is not necessary.
9. KEEP LOOKING FOR JESUS. The history of the monarchy and the message of the prophets increasingly build expectation for God's promised King.

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. Why does knowing about the divided kingdom make the Old Testament easier to understand?
2. What were the names of the northern and southern kingdoms?
3. Why did Jeroboam establish worship centers at Bethel and Dan?
4. What was the primary role of biblical prophets?
5. Why is it helpful to place prophets alongside the kings to whom they ministered?
6. What does the repeated political instability of northern Israel reveal about its history?
7. What does Jeroboam II's prosperity teach about outward success and spiritual faithfulness?
8. Why does Scripture evaluate northern kings negatively even when some were politically successful?
9. What made Judah's royal history different from Israel's?
10. Why did Israel fall to Assyria?
11. What happened to northern Israelites after Assyria conquered the kingdom?
12. Why did Judah eventually fall to Babylon?
13. What does God's repeated sending of prophets reveal about His character?
14. How can God sovereignly use Assyria or Babylon without approving their wickedness?
15. Why did exile appear to threaten God's promise to David?
16. Why is 586 BC especially important even though some deportations happened earlier?
17. What happened after Persia conquered Babylon?
18. Why was the return from exile not complete restoration?
19. How do Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi keep the story moving forward?
20. Why were even Judah's best kings insufficient?
21. How does the entire storyline prepare readers for Jesus?



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REVIEW AND RETENTION

1. Who were the three kings of the united monarchy? Saul, David, and Solomon.
2. Around what major event did the kingdom divide? The death of Solomon and accession of Rehoboam, around 930 BC.
3. What was the northern kingdom usually called? Israel.
4. What was the southern kingdom called? Judah.
5. What was the capital of Judah? Jerusalem.
6. What became the capital of the northern kingdom? Samaria.
7. Which king established Samaria as the northern capital? Omri.
8. Who was the northern kingdom's first king? Jeroboam I.
9. Which royal line continued in Judah? The house of David.
10. Name two important non-writing prophets from northern Israel. Elijah and Elisha.
11. Which prophets ministered during the general period of Jeroboam II? Jonah, Amos, and Hosea.
12. Why is Jeroboam II useful for understanding Amos and Hosea? Israel experienced outward prosperity while remaining spiritually corrupt and unjust.
13. Which major prophets were associated with Assyria's rise and Israel's fall? Isaiah, Micah, and Hosea.
14. When did the northern kingdom fall? Approximately 722 BC.
15. Did every member of the northern tribes disappear after 722 BC? No. Many were deported, but others remained or had moved elsewhere, including Judah.
16. Which prophet ministered through Judah's final decades and Jerusalem's fall? Jeremiah.
17. Were Judeans deported only in 586 BC? No. Babylonian deportations occurred in stages.
18. What happened in 586 BC? Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, and Judah's remaining political independence collapsed.
19. Which prophets are strongly associated with exile? Ezekiel and Daniel, with Jeremiah spanning Jerusalem's fall.
20. Which empire conquered Babylon and permitted return? Persia.
21. Which prophets encouraged rebuilding the temple? Haggai and Zechariah.
22. Which prophet belongs to the later post-exilic community? Malachi.
23. Why can exact dates differ slightly? Co-regencies and different methods of counting reigns.
24. Why can calculations of Jeremiah's seventy years differ? Interpreters may use different plausible starting and ending points.
25. Why are Joel and Obadiah not assigned exact dates here? Their historical settings are debated.
26. What is the timeline's main purpose? To locate biblical people, books, and events within Scripture's larger story.
27. Who is the ultimate promised King from David's line? Jesus Christ.

KEY MEMORY ANCHORS

- The kings changed. The kingdoms fell. God's Word and God's promises remained.
- Biblical books are not always arranged in chronological order.
- After Solomon: ISRAEL = NORTH. JUDAH = SOUTH.
- A 'good king' was still not the perfect King God's people needed.
- Visible prosperity is not proof of spiritual faithfulness.
- The failed kings created the question. The prophets kept alive the promise. Jesus is the King they were waiting for.
- Kingdoms rose. Kingdoms fell. God's promised King came.



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QUICK-REFERENCE TIMELINE

DATE / ERA	PEOPLE / EVENT	WHY IT MATTERS
c. 1050-930 BC	SAUL -> DAVID -> SOLOMON	United monarchy; Davidic covenant; temple built.
c. 930 BC	KINGDOM DIVIDES	ISRAEL = North · JUDAH = South
Northern Israel	Jeroboam I -> Omri/Samaria -> Ahab -> Jehu -> Jeroboam II -> final instability -> Hoshea	Major prophets: Elijah · Elisha · Jonah · Amos · Hosea
722 BC	SAMARIA FALLS TO ASSYRIA	Northern kingdom ends as an independent state.
Southern Judah	Rehoboam -> Davidic line -> Jehoshaphat -> Joash -> Uzziah -> Ahaz -> Hezekiah -> Manasseh -> Josiah -> final kings -> Zedekiah	Major prophets: Isaiah · Micah · Zephaniah · Jeremiah · Habakkuk · Huldah
Babylonian stages	Early deportation -> 597 BC deportation -> 586 BC Jerusalem and temple destroyed	Major exile prophets: Jeremiah · Ezekiel · Daniel
539/538 BC onward	PERSIA CONQUERS BABYLON -> RETURN BEGINS	Zerubbabel · Joshua · Ezra · Nehemiah; Haggai · Zechariah · Malachi
Joel / Obadiah	Exact historical placement debated	Do not force uncertain dates.
The story continues	People remain under foreign rule; Davidic monarchy not restored in former form	The prophets leave God's people waiting for the promised King.
JESUS CHRIST	Son of David · Righteous King · Savior	His kingdom will never end.

A SCRIPTURE PATH FOR CONTINUED STUDY

2 Samuel 7:8-16 - God's covenant with David
 1 Kings 11-12 - Solomon's compromise and kingdom division
 1 Kings 16:21-28 - Omri and Samaria
 1 Kings 17-19; 21 - Elijah, Ahab, Naboth
 2 Kings 2; 9-11 - Elisha, Jehu, Athaliah/Joash
 2 Kings 14:23-29; 15-17 - Jeroboam II and Israel's final years
 2 Kings 18-20 - Hezekiah, Isaiah, Assyria
 2 Kings 22-25 - Josiah, Babylon, Jerusalem's fall
 2 Chronicles 36 - Exile and Cyrus

Isaiah 1; 6; 7; 9 - Isaiah's setting and royal hope
 Hosea 1; Amos 1; 6; Micah 1 - Prophetic settings
 Jeremiah 1; 25; 29 - Calling, Babylon, seventy years
 Ezekiel 1; Daniel 1 - Prophets among exiles
 Ezra 1; 6 - Return and temple completion
 Haggai 1; Zechariah 1; 9:9 - Rebuilding and coming King
 Nehemiah 1-6 - Jerusalem's walls
 Malachi 3-4 - Coming messenger
 Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 1:26-33; John 18:33-37 - Jesus, Son of David and King

FINAL SUMMARY

The kings and prophets timeline is not primarily a list of names and dates. It is the story of God's faithfulness unfolding through generations of human failure. Israel began as one monarchy under Saul, David, and Solomon, then divided into northern Israel and southern Judah. From then on kings ruled simultaneously in two kingdoms while prophets spoke God's Word into both.

The northern kingdom experienced repeated dynastic upheaval. Omri established Samaria; Ahab and Jezebel promoted Baal worship; Elijah and Elisha ministered amid crisis. Jeroboam II later presided over prosperity, but Amos and Hosea exposed corruption beneath outward success. Assyria rose, and Israel fell in 722 BC. Many northerners were deported, but the people did not simply vanish.

Judah remained, yet eventually repeated many of Israel's sins. Isaiah and Micah warned; Josiah reformed; Jeremiah pleaded; Habakkuk wrestled with Babylon. Deportations came in stages, and in 586 BC Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. Ezekiel and Daniel served God in exile. Yet Persia conquered Babylon, Cyrus permitted return, the temple and walls were rebuilt, and Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi kept God's people looking forward.

Across the timeline one reality becomes clear: human kings could not save God's people. Some were wicked, some comparatively faithful, some outwardly successful - none were perfect. Assyria rose and fell. Babylon rose and fell. Persia rose. God's covenant promise remained. The exile, foreign domination, and centuries of waiting did not cancel the promise to David.

Then the New Testament begins: 'Jesus the Messiah the son of David' (Matthew 1:1). The kings help explain why God's people needed a better King. The prophets kept announcing that God would act. Jesus is the answer. He lived without sin, died for sinners, rose from the dead, reigns, and His kingdom will never end.

Final Memory Anchor

Kings came and went. Prophets spoke and warned. Kingdoms rose and fell. God remained faithful. And the promised King came. Jesus.