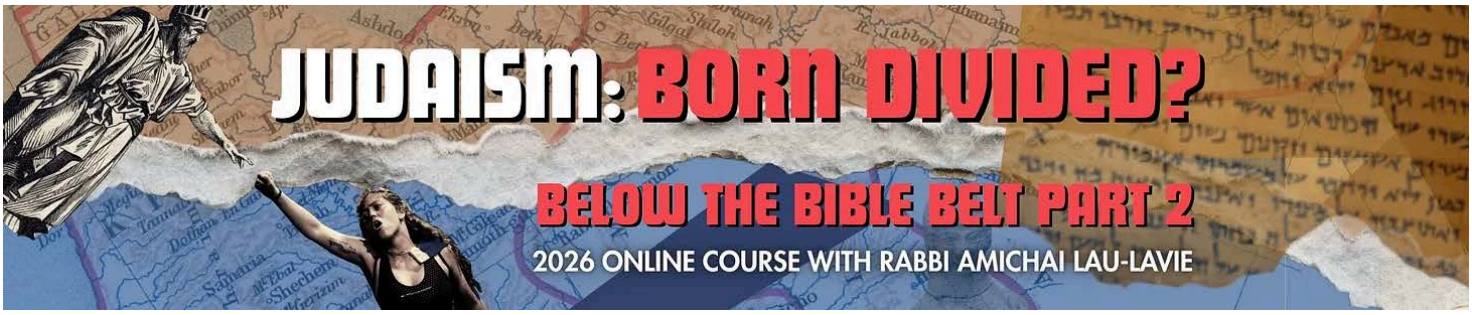


"Whip You with Scorpions"

February 22, 2026

Was it an inflated ego and a bad tax policy that split the United Kingdom?

And was there even one to begin with?

SOURCE 1

The division of the unified Kingdom of Israel into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms brought about distinct cultural and religious differences between the two regions. These differences were shaped by their geographical location, political leadership, international relations, and religious practices.
The division of Israel into the northern and southern kingdoms remains a significant event in the history of the ancient Near East. It marked a turning point in the religious, political, and social landscape of the Israelites.

The lasting legacy of this split kingdom highlights the complexities of this era, where power struggles and ideological differences such as the difference between idolatry and monotheism were commonplace.

While much remains unknown about the precise events leading up to the division, scholars continue to study this period and uncover new insights. Nonetheless, the split kingdom serves as a potent reminder that change is a constant in the story of humanity, and that understanding our past lays the foundation for a better future.

Secret Israel: The Split Kingdom

SOURCE 2

וַיִּשְׁבוּ הָעָם אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ | לֵאמֹר מַה־לָּנוּ חֵלֶק בְּדָוִיד וְלֹא־נַחֲלָה בְּבֶן־יִשַׁי אִישׁ לְאֹהָלֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַתָּה רְאֵה בֵיתְךָ דָּוִיד וַיֵּלֶךְ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֹהָלָיו׃

When all Israel saw that the king had not listened to them, the people proclaimed::

"We have no portion in David, No share in Jesse's son! Everyone to your tents, O Israel! Now look to your own house, O David."

II Chronicles 10:16

SOURCE 3

The starting point in our historical reconstructions should be the inscription of Merneptah from 1207 bce.

In 1896, the celebrated British archaeologist Flinders Petrie made the most sensational discovery of his long and celebrated career. Excavating at Thebes, an ancient Egyptian capital on the Nile's west bank, Petrie's team discovered a temple that the pharaoh Merneptah (1213–1203 bce) had built. Among the ruins, they found not only this ruler's earliest statue but also an inscribed black granite monument standing over ten feet high.

We know that at this time a population called Israel was living in Canaan. While we cannot be sure what this population included and what territories they occupied, we can be confident that their members would not have thought of themselves as the later biblical narrative depicts them – namely, as twelve tribes descending from Jacob's twelve sons. Most would have identified solely with their own families, clans, regions, and towns, without ever thinking in terms of a larger political community.

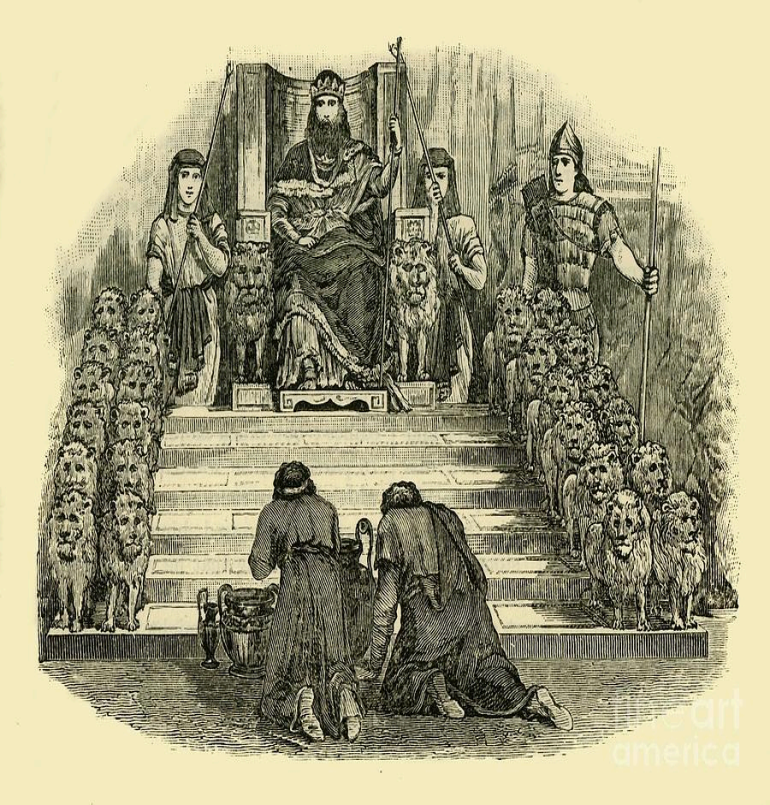
At this early stage, the name Israel appears to have designated a powerful tribe, or even alliance of tribes, that posed a threat to Egyptian armies. Its members may have been semi-nomadic outsiders who lived on the periphery of cities and urban civilizations in Canaan.
Thanks to Merneptah's stele, we know that the name long antedates the emergence of the Northern kingdom in the tenth and ninth centuries. We can also be confident that those who bore the name in Merneptah's time possessed some political significance;

otherwise, the Egyptian scribes would not have deemed their subjugation worthy of mention. The name lived on and assumed new meanings as groups joined the fold. However, had it not been for kings who, centuries later, used "Israel" to designate the diverse regions and populations that they consolidated and ruled, the name likely would have been long forgotten.

Jacob Wright, Why Did the Bible Begin

SOURCE 4

וַיְהִי֙ הַמֶּ֣לֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹ֔ה מֶ֖לֶךְ עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל: וְלִשְׁלֹמֹ֖ה שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂ֣ר נְצָבִ֔ים עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל וְכִלְכְּלוּ֙ אֶת־הַמֶּ֣לֶךְ וְאֶת־בֵּיתֹ֔ו חֹ֚דֶשׁ בַּשָּׁנָ֔ה יִהְיֶ֥ה עַל־הָאֶ֖חָד לְכַלְכֵּֽל: יְהוּדָ֣ה וְיִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל רַבִּ֥ים בַּחֹ֖ול אֲשֶׁר־עַל־הַיָּ֑ם לָרֹ֣ב אֹכְלִ֔ים וְשֹׂמְחִ֖ים וּשְׂמֵחִֽים:



King Solomon was now king over all Israel. Solomon had twelve prefects governing all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household; each had to provide food for one month in the year.

Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sands of the sea; they ate and drank and were content.

I Kings 4: 1-20

SOURCE 5

The kingdom of Solomon is etched in Jewish memory as an ideal, a singular moment in which peace and justice, serenity, prosperity and global harmony descended upon Israel and its land. It was a time in which the borders were quiet, the government was wise, the land was vast, and 'Judah and Israel were as abundant as the sand on the sea shore, eating, drinking and joyful' (Kings I 4:20) 'dwelling safely, each under their vine and fig, from Dan to BeerSheba.' (Kings I 5:5) Surrounded by the new Middle East where export makes its way to Africa, Yemen and India through the new port of Etzion Gever,

while imports make their way in from the Mediterranean thanks to the covenant signed by the wisest of men, King Solmoon, with Hiram the king of Tyre.

...Except that the historical facts behind these lofty descriptions are vague. The Kingdom of Solomon is not mentioned in any historical sources other than the Bible. The glorious era is even in contrast to what is later described in the Biblical book of Chronicles, where there is a description of a war that Solomon waged.

Amotz Asa-El, *The Jewish March of Folly*

SOURCE 6

וְיָרָבְעָם֮ בֶּן־נְבָט֒ אֶפְרָתִ֣י מִן־הַצְּרֵדָ֗ה וְשֵׁם֙ אִמּ֣וֹ צְרוּעָ֔ה אִשָּׁ֖ה אַלְמָנָ֑ה עֶ֚בֶד לִשְׁלֹמֹ֔ה וַיָּ֥רֶם יָ֖ד בַּמֶּֽלֶךְ׃ וְזֶ֣ה הַדָּבָ֔ר אֲשֶׁר־הֵרִ֥ים יָ֖ד בַּמֶּ֑לֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה֙ בָּנָ֣ה אֶת־הַמִּלּ֔וֹא סָגַ֕ר אֶת־פֶּ֖רֶץ עִ֥יר דָּוִ֖ד אָבִֽיו׃ וְהָאִ֣ישׁ יָרָבְעָ֗ם גִּבּ֤וֹר חָיִל֙ וַיַּ֣רְא שְׁלֹמֹ֔ה אֶת־הַנַּ֖עַר כִּי־עֹשֶׂ֣ה מְלָאכָ֑ה וַיַּפְקֵ֣ד אֹת֗וֹ לְכָל־סֵ֙בֶל֙ בֵּ֣ית יוֹסֵֽף׃ וַיְהִי֩ בָּעֵ֨ת הַהִ֜יא וְיָרָבְעָ֣ם יָצָ֗א מִירוּשָׁלִָ֙ם֙ וַיִּמְצָ֣א אֹת֔וֹ אֲחִיָּ֥ה הַשִּׁילֹנִ֖י הַנָּבִ֑יא בַּדָּ֣רֶךְ וְהוּא֙ מִתְכַּסֶּ֣ה בְּשַׂלְמָ֔ה חָדָ֖שָׁה וּשְׁנֵיהֶ֣ם בַּשָּׂדֶ֑ה׃ וַיִּתְפֹּשׂ֙ אֲחִיָּ֣ה בַּשַּׂלְמָ֔ה הַחֲדָשָׁ֖ה אֲשֶׁ֣ר עָלָ֑יו וַיִּקְרָעֵ֖הוּ שְׁנֵ֥ים עָשָׂ֖ר קְרָעִֽים׃ וַיֹּ֥אמֶר לְיָרָבְעָ֖ם קַח־לְךָ֣ עֲשָׂרָ֣ה קְרָעִ֑ים כִּ֣י כֹ֤ה אָמַר֙ יְהוָ֣ה אֱלֹהֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל הִנְנִ֥י קֹרֵ֛עַ אֶת־הַמַּמְלָכָ֖ה מִיַּ֣ד שְׁלֹמֹ֑ה וְנָתַתִּ֥י לְךָ֖ אֵ֥ת עֲשָׂרָ֥ה הַשְּׁבָטִֽים׃ הַשֵּׁ֥בֶט הָאֶחָ֖ד יִהְיֶה־לּ֑וֹ לְמַ֣עַן ׀ עַבְדִּ֣י דָוִ֗ד וּלְמַ֙עַן֙ יְרוּשָׁלַ֔͏ִם הָעִ֕יר אֲשֶׁ֥ר בָּחַ֖רְתִּי בָּ֑הּ מִכֹּל֙ שִׁבְטֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל׃ יַ֣עַן ׀ אֲשֶׁ֣ר עֲזָבֻ֗נִי וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ֙͏ לְעַשְׁתֹּ֣רֶת֮ אֱלֹהֵ֣י צִדֹנִים֒ לִכְמ֣וֹשׁ֗ אֱלֹהֵי֙ מוֹאָ֔ב וּלְמִלְכֹּ֖ם אֱלֹהֵ֣י בְנֵי־עַמּ֑וֹן וְלֹא־הָלְכ֤וּ בִדְרָכַי֙ לַעֲשׂ֣וֹת הַיָּשָׁ֔ר בְּעֵינַ֖י וְחֻקַּתַ֣י וּמִשְׁפָּטַ֑י כְּדָוִ֥ד אָבִֽיו׃ וְלֹא־אֶקַּ֞ח אֶת־כָּל־הַמַּמְלָכָ֣ה מִיָּדֹ֗ו כִּ֣י ׀ נָשִׂ֣יא אֲשִׁתֶּ֣נּוּ כֹּ֣ל יְמֵ֣י חַיָּ֔יו לְמַ֣עַן דָּוִ֔ד עַבְדִּ֖י אֲשֶׁ֣ר בָּחַ֑רְתִּי אֹת֗וֹ אֲשֶׁ֤ר שָׁמַר֙ מִצְוֹתַ֣י וְחֻקֹּתָ֔י׃ וְלָקַחְתִּ֥י הַמְּלוּכָ֖ה מִיַּ֣ד בְּנ֑וֹ וּנְתַתִּ֥יהָ לְךָ֖ אֵ֥ת עֲשֶׂ֥רֶת הַשְּׁבָטִֽים׃ וְלִבְנ֗וֹ אֶתֵּ֤ן שֵׁבֶט־אֶחָד֙ לְמַ֣עַן הֱיוֹת־נִ֣יר לְדָוִ֣יד עַבְדִּ֔י כָּל־הַיָּמִ֗ים ׀ לְפָנַ֙י֙ בִּירוּשָׁלַ֔͏ִם הָעִ֕יר אֲשֶׁ֥ר בָּחַ֖רְתִּי לִ֣י לָשׂ֥וּם שְׁמִ֖י שָֽׁם׃ וְאֹתְךָ֣ אֶקָּ֔ח וּמָלַכְתָּ֖ בְּכֹ֣ל אֲשֶׁר־תְּאַוֶּ֣ה נַפְשֶׁ֑ךָ וְהָיִ֥יתָ מֶ֖לֶךְ עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵֽל׃ וְהָיָ֗ה אִם־תִּשְׁמַע֙͏ אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁ֣ר אֲצַוֶּ֔ךָּ וְהָלַכְתָּ֖ בִּדְרָכַ֑י וְעָשִׂ֤יתָ הַיָּשָׁר֙ בְּעֵינַ֔י לִשְׁמֹ֥ר חֻקּוֹתַ֖י וּמִצְוֹתַ֑י כַּאֲשֶׁ֣ר עָשָׂ֔ה דָּוִ֖ד עַבְדִּ֑י וְהָיִ֤יתִי עִמָּךְ֙ וּבָנִ֣יתִי לְךָ֔ בַּ֥יִת־נֶ֖אֱמָן כַּאֲשֶׁ֣ר בָּנִ֔יתִי לְדָוִ֑ד וְנָתַתִּ֥י לְךָ֖ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵֽל׃ וְאַעֲנֶ֞ה אֶת־זֶ֣רַע דָּוִ֗ד לְמַ֙עַן֙ זֹ֔את אַ֖ךְ לֹ֣א כָל־הַיָּמִֽים׃ וַיְבַקֵּ֥שׁ שְׁלֹמֹ֖ה לְהָמִ֣ית אֶת־יָרָבְעָ֑ם וַיָּ֣קָם יָרָבְעָ֗ם וַיִּבְרַ֙ח מִצְרַ֔יְמָה אֶל־שִׁישַׁ֖ק מֶ֣לֶךְ־מִצְרַ֑יִם וַיְהִ֥י בְמִצְרַ֖יִם עַד־מ֥וֹת שְׁלֹמֹֽה׃

Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, the son of a widow whose name was Zeruah, was in Solomon's service; he raised his hand against the king.

The circumstances under which he raised his hand against the king were as follows: Solomon built the Millo and repaired the breach of the city of his father, David.

This man Jeroboam was very capable, and when Solomon saw that the young man was a productive worker, he appointed him over all the forced labor of the House of Joseph.

During that time Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem and the prophet Ahijah of Shiloh met him on the way. He had put on a new robe; and when the two were alone in the open country,

Ahijah took hold of the new robe he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces.

"Take ten pieces," he said to Jeroboam. "For thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel: I am about to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hands, and I will give you ten tribes.

But one tribe shall remain his—for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel. For they have forsaken Me; they have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Phoenicians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites; they have not walked in My ways, or done what is pleasing to Me, or [kept] My laws and rules, as his father David did.

Solomon and his wives worshiping an idol, Bible moralisee, folio 122, 1230

However, I will not take the entire kingdom away from him, but will keep him as ruler as long as he lives for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, and who kept My commandments and My laws.

But I will take the kingship out of the hands of his son and give it to you—the ten tribes.

To his son I will give one tribe, so that there may be a lamp for My servant David forever before Me in Jerusalem—the city where I have chosen to establish My name. But you have been chosen by Me; reign wherever you wish, and you shall be king over Israel. If you heed all that I command you, and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, keeping My laws and commandments as My servant David did, then I will be with you and I will build for you a lasting dynasty as I did for David. I hereby give Israel to you;

and I will chastise David's descendants for that sin, though not forever."

Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death, but Jeroboam promptly fled to King Shishak of Egypt; and he remained in Egypt till the death of Solomon.

1 Kings 11:11-40

SOURCE 7

Rezoning the country has its hazards. Notwithstanding Solomon's intent, historic identities endure; ethnic statuses remain intact. A significant and troubling detail is that the tribe of Judah is not specified in this list of tax colonies. Some suggest that this omission is evidence that Solomon's own tribe is fully absolved of its tax burden. Solomon's changes are most severe for the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, as they suffer from a more invasive subdivision, and hence a disproportionate tax burden. This uneven policy is possibly deliberate, intended to weaken the tribes of Joseph, who represent a potential source of opposition to the king, but this strategy has a devastating ripple effect in later years. The act that eventually tears Solomon's kingdom apart after his death is a demand for a reduction of the crushing tax burden, and the epicenter of the revolt is the tribes of Joseph.

Alex Israel, *Kings: Torn in Two*

SOURCE 8

Rehoboam, King of Israel, son of King Solomon, succeeded his father at the age of 41 in approximately 930 B.C. Without loss of time, the new King committed the act of folly that was to divide his nation and lose forever its ten northern tribes, collectively called Israel.

Among them were many who were disaffected by heavy taxation in the form of forced labor imposed under King Solomon, and had already in his reign made an effort to secede. They had gathered around one of Solomon's generals, Jeroboam, "a mighty man of valor," who undertook to lead them into revolt upon a prophecy that he would inherit rule of the ten tribes afterward. The Lord, speaking through the voice of a certain Ahijah the Shilonite, played a part in this affair, but his role then and later is obscure and seems to have been inserted by narrators who felt the Almighty's hand had to be present. Acknowledged King without question by the two southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin, Rehoboam, clearly aware of unrest in Israel, traveled at once to Shechem, center of the north, to obtain the people's allegiance. He was met instead by a delegation of Israel's representatives who demanded that he lighten the heavy yoke of labor put upon them by his father and said that if he did so they would serve him as loyal subjects. Among the delegates was Jeroboam who had hurriedly been sent from his forced exile in Egypt as soon as King Solomon died, and whose presence must certainly have warned Rehoboam that he faced a critical situation. Temporizing, Rehoboam asked the delegation to depart and return after three days for his reply. Meanwhile he consulted with the old men of his father's council, who advised him to accede to the people's demand, and told him that if he would act graciously and "speak good words to them they will be thy servants forever." With the first sensation of sovereignty heating his blood, Rehoboam found this advice too tame and turned to the "young men that were grown up with him." They knew his disposition and, like counselors

of any time who wish to consolidate their position in the "Oval Office," gave advice they knew would be palatable. He should make no concessions but tell the people outright that his rule would be not lighter but heavier than his father's. They composed for him the famous words that could be any despot's slogan:

"He spoke to them in accordance with the advice of the children, and said, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father flogged you with whips, but I will flog you with scorpions." 1 Kings 12:14

Fragment of the wall painting in the Great Council Chamber of Basel Town Hall, Hans Holbein the Younger, 1520's

Delighted with this ferocious formula, Rehoboam faced the delegation when it returned on the third day and addressed them "roughly," word for word as the young men had suggested. That his subjects might not be prepared to accept this reply meekly seems not to have occurred to Rehoboam beforehand. Not without reason he earned in Hebrew history the designation "ample in folly." Instantly—so instantly as to suggest that they had previously decided upon their course of action in case of a negative reply—the men of Israel announced their secession from the House of David with the battle cry "To your tents, O Israel! See to your own house, David!"

Rehoboam took the most provocative action possible in the circumstances. Calling upon the very man who represented the hated yoke, Adoram, the commander or overseer of the forced labor tribute, he ordered him, apparently without providing supporting forces, to establish his authority. The people stoned Adoram to death, upon which the rash and foolish King speedily summoned his chariot and fled to Jerusalem, where he summoned all the warriors of Judah and Benjamin for war to reunite the nation.

At the same time, the people of Israel appointed Jeroboam their King.

He reigned for twenty-two years and Rehoboam for seventeen, "and there was war between them all their days." The protracted struggle weakened both states, encouraged the vassal lands conquered by David east of the Jordan — Moab, Edom,

Ammon and others—to regain their independence and opened the way to invasion by Egypt.

The twelve tribes were never reunited. Torn by their conflict, the two states could not maintain the proud empire established by David and Solomon, which had extended from northern Syria to the borders of Egypt with dominion over the international caravan routes and access to foreign trade through the Red Sea. Reduced and divided, they were less able to withstand aggression by their neighbors... The alternative course that Rehoboam might have taken, advised by the elders and so lightly rejected, exacted a long revenge that has left its mark for 2800 years."

Barbara W. Tuchman, The March of Folly

SOURCE 9

וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי לֹא־שָׁמַע הַמֶּלֶךְ לָהֶם וַיָּשִׁיבוּ הָעָם אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ ׀ לֵאמֹר מַה־לָּנוּ חֵלֶק בְּדָוִד וְלֹא־נַחֲלָה בְּבֶן־יִשַׁי אִישׁ לְאֹהָלֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַתָּה רְאֵה בֵיתְךָ דָּוִיד
וַיֵּלֶךְ כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֹהָלָיו׃ וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּעָרֵי יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיהֶם רְחַבְעָם׃ וַיִּפְשְׁעוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּבֵית דָּוִיד עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃

When all Israel saw that the king had not listened to them, the people answered the king:

"We have no portion in David, No share in Jesse's son!

Everyone to your tents, O Israel! Now look to your own house, O David."

So all Israel returned to their homes.

But Rehoboam continued to reign over the Israelites who lived in the towns of Judah.

Israel has been in revolt against the house of David to this day.

2 Chronicles 10

THE KINGS OF JUDAH & ISRAEL

FROM 1 & 2 KINGS

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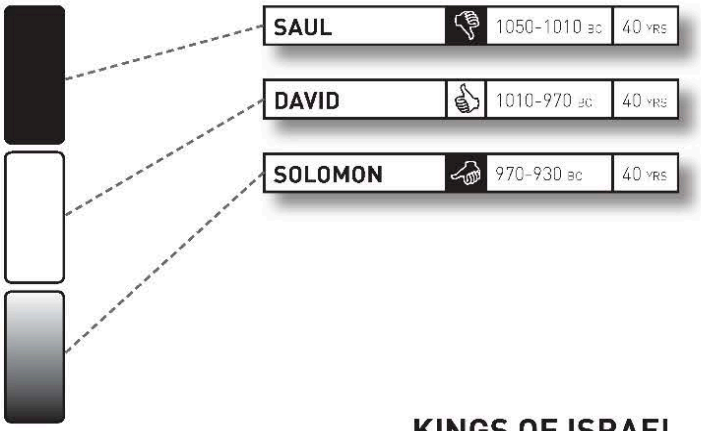


KINGS OF JUDAH

REHOBOAM	930-913 BC	17 YRS
ABIJAH	913-910 BC	3 YRS
ASA	910-869 BC	41 YRS
JEHOSHAPHAT	872-848 BC	25 YRS
JEHORAM	848-841 BC	7 YRS
AHAZIAH	841 BC	1 YR
ATHALIAH	841-835 BC	7 YRS
JOASH	835-796 BC	40 YRS
AMAZIAH	796-767 BC	29 YRS
AZARIAH	792-740 BC	52 YRS
JOTHAM	750-735 BC	16 YRS
AHAZ	735-715 BC	16 YRS
HEZEKIAH	715-686 BC	29 YRS
MANASSAH	697-642 BC	55 YRS
AMON	642-640 BC	2 YRS
JOSIAH	640-609 BC	31 YRS
JEHOAHAZ	609 BC	3 MTHS
JEHOIAKIM	609-598 BC	11 YRS
JEHOIACHIN	598-597 BC	3 MTHS
ZEDEKIAH	597-586 BC	11 YRS

JUDAH EXILED BY BABYLON (586 BC)

KINGDOM DIVIDES (922 BC)

KINGS OF ISRAEL

JEROBOAM I	930-909 BC	22 YRS
NADAB	909-908 BC	2 YRS
BAASHA	908-886 BC	24 YRS
ELAH	886-885 BC	2 YRS
ZIMRI	885 BC	7 DAYS
TIBNI	885-880 BC	5 YRS
OMRI	885-874 BC	11 YRS
AHAB	874-853 BC	21 YRS
AHAZIAH	853-852 BC	1 YR
JORAM	852-841 BC	11 YRS
JEHU	841-814 BC	28 YRS
JEHOAHAZ	814-798 BC	17 YRS
JEHOASH	798-782 BC	16 YRS
JEROBOAM II	793-753 BC	41 YRS
ZECHARIAH	753 BC	6 MTHS
SHALLUM	752 BC	1 MTH
MENAHEM	752-742 BC	10 YRS
PEKAHIAH	742-740 BC	2 YRS
PEKAH*	752-732 BC	20 YRS
HOSHEA	732-722 BC	9 YRS

ISRAEL ASSIMILATED BY ASSYRIA (722 BC)

KEY

"Did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father David had done."

"Did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, but not as his father David had done." (i.e. completely rid the land of idolatry)

"Did what was evil in the eyes of the LORD."

* Pekah's 20-year reign presumably includes a period of rule as rival to Menahem.

SOURCE 10

In the first half of the eighth century b.c.e, Israel ruled over the lion's share of the territory of the two Hebrew kingdoms, and its population accounted for three quarters of the people of Israel and Judah combined. Israel was stronger than Judah both militarily and economically, and in the first half of the ninth century and in the first half of the eighth century—almost half the time the two kingdoms co-existed—Israel dominated the southern kingdom. Nonetheless, Israel has lingered in the shadow of Judah, both in the story told in the Hebrew Bible and in the attention paid to it by modern scholarship.

The history of ancient Israel in the Hebrew Bible was written by Judahite authors in Jerusalem, the capital of the southern kingdom and the hub of the Davidic dynasty. As such it transmits Judahite ideas regarding territory, kingship, temple, and cult.

This situation is amplified by the fact that biblical, archaeological, and historical studies of ancient Israel have been dominated by the Judeo-Christian historical tradition, which has been shaped, in turn, by the Hebrew Bible, that is, the Judahite text.

The Bible is what it is, and hence biblical scholarship basically deals with Judah and with the Judahite perspective of Israel, which was formulated a century after the collapse of the northern kingdom. Archaeological research somewhat balances this picture. Iron Age Judah has been thoroughly studied. Jerusalem is one of the most excavated cities in the world, especially over the last fifty years, and almost all the major sites in its countryside have been excavated: Mizpah and Hebron in the highlands; Lachish and Beth-shemesh in the Shephelah; and Beersheba and Arad in the Beer-sheba Valley. Israel has not been deprived of investigation. Samaria, the capital, has been thoroughly excavated twice in the past, and all major countryside sites have also been explored. It is field research, then, that enables one to write an archaeology-based, Judahite ideology–free history of Israel, and in the end also to reach a more balanced reconstruction of the history of ancient Israel in general and the two Hebrew kingdoms in particular.

Israel Finkelstein, The Forgotten Kingdom: The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel (2013)

SOURCE 11

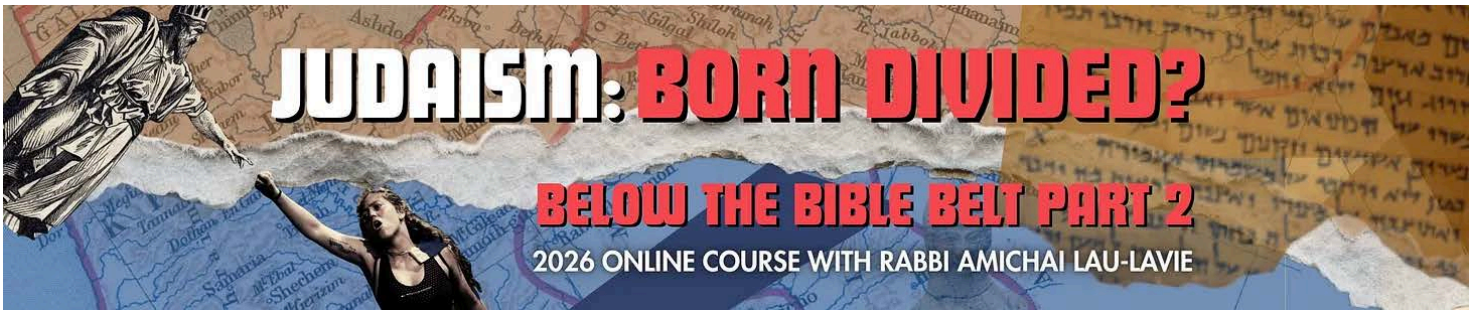
מִן הַמָּקוֹם שֶׁבּוֹ אָנוּ צוֹדְקִים,
לֹא יִצְמְחוּ לְעוֹלָם
פְּרָחִים בָּאָבִיב.
הַמָּקוֹם שֶׁבּוֹ אָנוּ צוֹדְקִים,
הוּא רָמוּס וְקָשֶׁה
כְּמוֹ חָצֵר.
אֲבָל סְפֵקוֹת וְאַהֲבוֹת עוֹשִׂים
אֶת הָעוֹלָם לְתָחוּחַ
כְּמוֹ הַחֲפַרְפֶּרֶת, כְּמוֹ חָרִישׁ.
וּלְחִישָׁה תִּשָּׁמַע בַּמָּקוֹם
שֶׁבּוֹ הָיָה הַבַּיִת
אָשֶׁר נֶחֱרַב.

From the place where we are right flowers will never grow in the spring.

The place where we are right is hard and trampled like a yard.

But doubts and loves dig up the world like a plow, a mole.

And a whisper will be heard in the place where the ruined house once stood.

Yehuda Amichai, "The Place Where We Are Right" (trans. Stephen Mitche

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