

## A Contribution to the Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah

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The chronology of the kings of Israel and Judah is one of the most important and, at the same time, complicated matters in the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> There have been numerous attempts at establishing the period when the rulers of both these kingdoms governed.<sup>2</sup> Many difficulties can be resolved if we take into consideration that:<sup>3</sup>

1. In the ancient Middle East, two methods of presenting the years in which individual rulers governed were used: predatation and postdatation.<sup>4</sup>

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- 1 T. Brzegowy, *Chronologia epoki królewskiej w starożytnym Izraelu*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 51 (1998) no. 4, p. 261–270, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.697>.
  - 2 E. R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, Grand Rapids 1994; E. R. Thiele, *The Chronology of the Kings of Judah and Israel*, „Journal of Near Eastern Studies” 3 (1944) no. 3, p. 137–186, <https://doi.org/10.1086/370716>; V. Pavlovský, E. Vogt, *Die Jahre der Könige von Juda und Israel*, „Biblica” 45 (1964) no. 3, p. 321–347; W. F. Albright, *The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel*, „Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research” 100 (1945), p. 16–22, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1355182>; A. Jepsen, R. Hanhart, *Untersuchungen zur israelitisch-jüdischen Chronologie*, Berlin 1964; G. Larsson, *The Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah as a System*, „Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft” 114 (2006) no. 2, p. 224–235, <https://doi.org/10.1515/zatw.2002.012>; G. Galil, *The Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah*, Leiden–New York–Köln 1996 (Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East, 9); W. H. Barnes, *Studies in the Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel*, Leiden 1991 (Harvard Semitic Monographs, 48), <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004369573>; A. Laato, *New Viewpoints on the Chronology of the Kings of Judah and Israel*, „Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft” 98 (2009) no. 2, p. 210–221, <https://doi.org/10.1515/zatw.1986.98.2.210>; W. Wifall, *The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel*, „Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft” 80 (2009) no. 3, p. 319–337, <https://doi.org/10.1515/zatw.1968.80.3.319>; M. Christine Tetley, *The Reconstructed Chronology of the Divided Kingdom*, Winona Lake 2005; J. Hayes, P. Hooker, *A New Chronology for the Kings of Israel and Judah and Its Implications for Biblical History and Literature*, Eugene 2007.
  - 3 A. Cundall, *Chronologia królów*, [in:] *Przewodnik po Biblii*, red. nauk. D. i P. Alexander, konsultacja nauk. pol. wyd. W. Chrostowski, M. Wojciechowski, przekł. i red. T. Mieszkowski, Warszawa 1997, p. 269–271.
  - 4 E. Curtis, *The Old Testament Reckoning of Regnal Years*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 14 (1895) no. 1–2, p. 125–130, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3268894>; J. Miller, *Another Look at the Chronology of*

2. Judah and Israel used different calendars, according to which the year began at a different time.<sup>5</sup>
3. As a result of the co-governance, the rule of some rulers overlapped.<sup>6</sup>
4. Some rival rulers could simultaneously rule over only some parts of the state.<sup>7</sup>

Despite this, there are great difficulties in establishing the time when the rulers of Israel and Judah governed.<sup>8</sup> The genealogies of kings, however, could be the result of the Biblical author's intensive editorial work. John H. Hull notes that the letters of the kings of Israel and Judah written after Solomon's death each consist of nineteen rulers:<sup>9</sup>

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*the Early Divided Monarchy*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 86 (1967) no. 3, p. 276–288, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3263008>.

- 5 D. Clines, *The Evidence for an Autumnal New Year in Pre-Exilic Israel Reconsidered*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 93 (1974) no. 1, p. 22–40, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3263863>; E. Auerbach, *Der Wechsel des Jahres-Anfangs in Juda im Lichte der Neugefundenen Babylonischen Chronik*, „Vetus Testamentum” 9 (1959) no. 2, p. 113–121, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853359X00186>; S. Talmon, *Divergences in Calendar-Reckoning in Ephraim and Judah*, „Vetus Testamentum” 8 (1958) no. 1, p. 48–74, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853358X00042>; J. B. Segal, *Intercalation and the Hebrew Calendar*, „Vetus Testamentum” 7 (1957) no. 1, p. 250–307, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853357X00205>; D. Clines, *Regnal Year Reckoning in the Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah*, „Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology” 1 (1972) no. 5, p. 9–34; cf. E. Auerbach, *Die Babylonische Datierung im Pentateuch und sas Alter ses Priester-Kodex*, „Vetus Testamentum” 2 (1952) no. 1, p. 334–342, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853352X00426>.
- 6 E.g. E. Thiele, *Coregencies and Overlapping Reigns among the Hebrew Kings*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 93 (1974) no. 2, p. 174–200, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3263092>; E. Ball, *The Coregency of David and Solomon (1 Kings I)*, „Vetus Testamentum” 27 (1977) no. 3, p. 268–279, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853377X00168>; cf. D. B. Redford, *The Coregency of Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II*, „The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology” 51 (1965) no. 1, p. 107–122, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030751336505100111>.
- 7 E. R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, Grand Rapids 1994, p. 61–65; H. Cook, *Pekah*, „Vetus Testamentum” 14 (1964) no. 2, p. 121–135, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1516376>.
- 8 E. R. Thiele, *A Comparison of the Chronological Data of Israel and Judah*, „Vetus Testamentum” 4 (1954) no. 1, p. 185–195, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853354X00172>; E. Thiele, *Pekah to Hezekiah*, „Vetus Testamentum” 16 (1966) no. 1, p. 83–107, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853366X00458>; A. Green, *The Chronology of the Last Days of Judah: Two Apparent Discrepancies*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 101 (1982) no. 1, p. 57–73, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3260440>; G. Galil, *The Babylonian Calendar and the Chronology of the Last Kings of Judah*, „Biblica” 72 (1991) no. 3, p. 367–378, <https://doi.org/10.2143/BIB.72.3.3217725>; N. Na'aman, *Historical and Chronological Notes On the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah in the Eighth Century B.C.*, „Vetus Testamentum” 36 (1986) no. 1, p. 71–92, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853386X00159>.
- 9 J. Hull, *King Lists as a Structuring Principle in the Book of Kings*, [in:] *Partners with God: Theological and Critical Readings of the Bible in Honor of Marvin A. Sweeney*, eds. S. L. Birdsong, S. Frolov, vol. 2, Claremont 2017, p. 133–146, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvbc33m.17>.

	List of the Kings of Israel		List of the Kings of Judah
1	Jeroboam I	1	Rehoboam
2	Nadah	2	Abijah
3	Baasha	3	Asa
4	Elah	4	Jehoshaphat
5	Zimri	5	Jehoram
6	Omri	6	Ahaziah
7	Ahab	7	Joash
8	Ahaziah	8	Amaziah
9	Jehoram	9	Azariah
10	Jehu	10	Jotham
11	Jehoahaz	11	Ahaz
12	Jehoash	12	Hezekiah
13	Jeroboam II	13	Manasseh
14	Zechariah	14	Amon
15	Shallum	15	Josiah
16	Menahem	16	Jehoahaz
17	Pekahiah	17	Jehoiakim
18	Pekah	18	Jehoiachin
19	Hoshea	19	Zedekiah

Along with the kings of the United Kingdom – Saul, David, and Solomon – this is a total of forty-one rulers. Such a composition of the genealogy of the kings of Judah and Israel would not reflect the real number of rulers but instead be the result of the editor of the Books of Kings being inspired by the lists of Assyrian kings,<sup>10</sup> which show a certain pattern with regards to the number of rulers, their order, and even the duration of their rule.<sup>11</sup>

Such a conception cannot be accepted. J. H. Hull does not take into consideration Tibni in the list of the rulers of Israel or Athaliah in the list of the kings of Judah. It is clear why Tibni is omitted. According to the author of the Book of Kings, after the death of Zimri the people of Israel became divided:

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>11</sup> J. Høystrup, “Remarkable Numbers” in *Old Babylonian Mathematical Texts: A Note on the Psychology of Numbers*. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 52 (1993) no. 4, p. 281–286, <https://doi.org/10.1086/373636>; D. Young, *A Mathematical Approach to Certain Dynastic Spans in the Sumerian King List*, „*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*” 47 (1988) no. 2, p. 123–129, <https://doi.org/10.1086/373263>.

“At that time the people of Israel were divided in two, half following Tibni, son of Ginath, to make him king, and half for Omri” (1 Kings 16:21). Although Zimri died in the twenty-seventh year of the rule of Asa, king of Judah, and Omri gained power in the thirty-first year of the rule of Asa, king of Judah (1 Chronicles 16:15, 18, 21, 23), there is no reference to Tibni, who must have been the de facto ruler at the time. However, the Biblical author clearly does not consider him to be a king.

It is different with Athaliah. The author of the Books of Kings clearly states that Athaliah ruled the country (2 Kings 11:1, 3; 2 Chronicles 22:10, 12).<sup>12</sup> Neither her origins<sup>13</sup> nor her social status<sup>14</sup> are of any significance. The selection of an appropriate bride for the descendant of the Davidic dynasty must have been thought-out.<sup>15</sup> However, the mere fact of including her in the list of de facto rulers, even despite the lack of a “model of governance,” counts.<sup>16</sup> This correction rejects Hull’s concept, but it allows for the discovery of the message of the lists of rulers in the Books of Kings. It is enough to compare the list of

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- 12 N. Na‘aman, *Queen Athaliah as a Literary-Historical Figure*, „Semitica” 58 (2016), p. 181–205, <https://doi.org/10.2143/SE.58.0.3170087>; O. Sergi, *Queenship in Judah revisited: Athaliah and the Davidic Dynasty in Historical Perspective*, [in:] *Tabou et transgressions: Actes du colloque organisé par le Collège de France, Paris, les 11–12 avril 2012*, ed. by J.-M. Durand, M. Guichard, T. Römer, Fribourg–Göttingen 2015 (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, 274), p. 99–112, <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-134494>; R. G. Branch, *Athaliah, a treacherous queen: A careful analysis of her story in 2 Kings 11 and 2 Chronicles 22:10–23:21*, „In die Skriflig” 38 (2004) no. 4, p. 537–560, <https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v38i4.448>.
- 13 Cf. J. Begrich, *Atalja, die tochter Omris*, „Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft” 53 (1935) no. 1, p. 78–79; H. J. Katzenstein, *Who Were the Parents of Athaliah?*, „Israel Exploration Journal” 3 (1955), p. 194–197.
- 14 Cf. S. Ackerman, *The Queen Mother and the Cult in Ancient Israel*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 112 (1993) no. 3, p. 385–401, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3267740>; Z. Ben-Barak, *The Status and Right of the Gēbîrâ*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 110 (1991) no. 1, p. 23–34, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3267147>; N.-E. Andreasen, *The Role of the Queen Mother in Israelite Society*, „The Catholic Biblical Quarterly” 45 (1983) no. 2, p. 179–194; K. Spanier, *The Queen Mother in the Judean Royal Court: Maacah – A Case Study*, [in:] *A Feminist Companion to Samuel and Kings*, ed. by A. Brenner, Sheffield 1994, p. 186–195; C. Smith, *Queenship in Israel? The Cases of Bathsheba, Jezebel and Athaliah*, [in:] *King and Messiah in Israel and the ancient Near East. Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. by J. Day, Sheffield 1998, p. 142–162 (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement series, 270).
- 15 H. M. Niemann, *Choosing Brides for the Crown-Prince. Matrimonial Politics in the Davidic Dynasty*, „Vetus Testamentum” 56 (2006) no. 2, p. 225–238, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853306776907467>.
- 16 For more on models of governance, see: S. Bin-Nun, *Formulas From Royal Records of Israel and of Judah*, „Vetus Testamentum” 18 (1968) no. 1–4, p. 414–432, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853368X00311>; A. Green, *Regnal Formulas in the Hebrew and Greek Texts of the Books of Kings*, „Journal of Near Eastern Studies” 42 (1983) no. 3, p. 167–180, <https://doi.org/10.1086/373017>.

kings of Israel and the Davidic dynasty next to the patriarchs (Genesis 5:11, 10–26; 1 Chronicles 1:1–34) whose genealogy is a theological work,<sup>17</sup> along with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and a certain surprising overlap is revealed. For obvious reasons, the kings of Judah will be counted beginning with David, not Saul, because it was David and not Saul who founded the dynasty that ruled Judah and chose Jerusalem for its capital. What is more, it was David who conquered Jerusalem and made it his capital.<sup>18</sup>

		Patriarchs	Israel	Davidic Dynasty
1	א	Adam	Saul	David
2	ב	Seth	David	Solomon
3	ג	Enos	Solomon	Rehoboam
4	ד	Kenan	Jeroboam I	Abijah
5	ה	Mahalalel	Nadab	Asa
6	ו	Jared	Baasha	Jehoshaphat
7	ז	Enoch	Elah	Jehoram
8	ח	Methuselah	Zimri	Ahaziah
9	ט	Lamech	Omri	Athaliah
10	י	Noah	Ahab	Jehoash
11	כ	Shem	Ahaziah	Amaziah
12	ל	Arpachshad	Jehoram	Azariah
13	מ	Salah	Jehu	Jotham
14	נ	Eber	Jehoahaz	Ahaz
15	ס	Peleg	Jehoash	Hezekiah
16	ע	Reu	Jeroboam I	Manasseh
17	פ	Serug	Zechariah	Amon
18	צ	Nahor	Shallum	Josiah
19	ק	Terah	Menahem	Jehoahaz

17 Cf. J. Łach, *Problem interpretacji genealogii 1 Krn 1–9*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 38 (1985) no. 2, p. 100–110, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.1423>; E. Assis, *From Adam to Esau and Israel: an anti-edomite ideology in 1 Chronicles 1*, „Vetus Testamentum” 56 (2006) no. 3, p. 287–302, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853306778149629>.

18 A. Fischer, *Von Hebron nach Jerusalem. Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie zur Erzählung von König David in II Sam 1–5*, Berlin–New York 2004 (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 335), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110919561>; M. Oeming, *Die Eroberung Jerusalems durch David in deuteronomistischer und chronistischer Darstellung (II Sam 5, 6–9 und I Chr 11, 4–8)*, „Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft” 106 (2009) no. 3, p. 404–420, <https://doi.org/10.1515/zatw.1994.106.3.404>.

		Patriarchs	Israel	Davidic Dynaŝty
20	א	Abraham	Pekahiah	Jehoiakim
21	ב	Isaac	Pekah	Jehoiachin
22	ג	Jacob	Hosea	Zedekiah

The list of patriarchs is according to the Hebrew text, not the Greek; thus, Cainan is not there (see: Luke 3:23–38). He could have been known to the authors of the Hebrew text,<sup>19</sup> but his omission gives a list of twenty-two patriarchs from Adam to Jacob.<sup>20</sup> That is the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet.<sup>21</sup> The genealogies of the kings of Israel and Judah each contain twenty-two rulers. It is unlikely that this was a mere accident. A new and deeper presentation of literary matters related to the Books of Kings sheds light on their theology.<sup>22</sup> For the Biblical author, the number of twenty-two kings in the Bible could have been the main objective and more important than the chronology itself.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the genealogies of the kings of Israel and Judah probably do not reflect the real number of rulers, but they were arranged in such an order that there are twenty-two rulers in each line. In order to achieve such a result, some kings could have been omitted or added.<sup>24</sup> Through an allusion to the entire Hebrew alphabet, the Biblical author

19 H. R. Jacobus, *The Curse of Cainan (Jub. 8. 1-5): Genealogies in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 and a Mathematical Pattern*, „Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha” 18 (2009) no. 3, p. 207–232, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0951820709103182>.

20 J. Northcote, *The Schematic Development of Old Testament Chronography: Towards an Integrated Model*, „Journal for the Study of the Old Testament” 29 (2004) no. 1, p. 31, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030908920402900101>.

21 J. A. Benner, *The Ancient Hebrew Language and Alphabet. Understanding the Ancient Hebrew Language of the Bible Based on the Ancient Hebrew Culture and Thought*, College Station 2004, p. 119–120.

22 J. Łach, *Jak ujmować w nowy sposób teologię w 1–2 Królów?*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 49 (1996) no. 4, p. 249–255, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.842>.

23 Cf. *Zahlen- und Buchstabensysteme im Dienste religiöser Bildung*, hrsg. von L. V. Schimmelpfennig, R. G. Kratz, Tübingen 2019 (Studies in Education and Religion in Ancient and Pre-Modern History in the Mediterranean and its Environs, 5), <https://doi.org/10.1628/978-3-16-158319-3>; T. Hanelt, *Znaczenie liczb w Starym Testamencie*, „Studia Gnesnensia” 23 (2009), p. 55–64; T. Stanek, *Liczy jako aspekt języka religijnego. Przykłady retoryki Tory*, „Filozofia Religii” 4 (2008), p. 103–117.

24 Cf. e.g. N. Na’aman, *The Royal Dynasties of Judah and Israel*, „Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte” 22 (2016), p. 59–73; T. Ishida, *The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel. A Study on the Formation and Development of Royal-Dynastic Ideology*, Berlin–New York 1977 (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 142), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110853766>.

suggests that, like the era of the patriarchs, the era of kings in both Israel and Judah is a completed and closed period in the history of the Chosen People.<sup>25</sup>

According to the prophet Hosea, making Saul king was a sin (Hosea 8:4; 9:15; see: 1 Samuel 8:6–8). In addition to its opponents, this form of rule also had its supporters (Judges 8:22–23; 9:1–2; 1 Samuel 9:1–10; 10:17–24; 12:1–25). The Books of Samuel seem to present different views.<sup>26</sup> After the fall of the monarchy, the era of the kings and this form of rule were perceived in different ways.<sup>27</sup> However, if not even the author of the Books of Samuel and Kings does not condemn the monarchy and succession,<sup>28</sup> the era of the kings seems to be a reversal of the age of patriarchs. Just as the fall of man began with Adam, the first man, the fall of Israel took place during the last of the kings of Israel, Hosea, while the fall of Judah coincided with Zedekiah, the last of the kings of Judah. Just as Jacob, the last of the patriarchs, is most important for Israel, David, the first of the Davidic Dynasty, is most important to the House of David. Whereas the last three patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – are most important to the age of the patriarchs, the first three kings – Saul, David, and Solomon – are of the greatest importance to the era of the kings. Thus, the genealogies of the kings of Israel and Judah are a result of the Biblical author's conscious composition, which is intended to contrast the era of the kings with that of the patriarchs.

If the first three kings, who are most important to the era of the kings, are a reflection of the three most important patriarchs, they could be merely legendary figures.<sup>29</sup> In that case, the golden age of Solomon would be only

25 Cf. D. Janzen, *Chronicles and the Politics of Davidic Restoration. A Quiet Revolution*, London–Oxford–New York–New Delhi–Sydney 2017 (The Library of Hebrew Bible. Old Testament Studies, 655).

26 D. McCarthy, *The Inauguration of Monarchy in Israel: A Form-Critical Study of 1 Samuel 8–12*, „Interpretation“ 27 (1973) no. 4, p. 401–412, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002096437302700403>; L. Eslinger, *Viewpoints and Point of View in 1 Samuel 8–12*, „Journal for the Study of the Old Testament“ 8 (1983) no. 26, p. 61–76, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030908928300802603>.

27 I. Wilson, *Kingship and Memory in Ancient Judah*, Oxford 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190499907.001.0001>.

28 J. Blenkinsopp, *Another Contribution to the Succession Narrative Debate (2 Samuel 11–20; 1 Kings 1–2)*, „Journal for the Study of the Old Testament“ 38 (2013) no. 1, p. 35–58, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309089213492811>. Cf. J. Van Seters, *A Revival of the Succession Narrative and the Case against It*, „Journal for the Study of the Old Testament“ 39 (2014) no. 1, p. 3–14, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309089214551510>.

29 Cf. B. E. Kelle, *The Early Monarchy and the Stories of Saul, David, and Solomon*, [in:] S. Niditch, *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel*, New York 2015, p. 176–196, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118774199.ch10>.

a myth.<sup>30</sup> It should be unsurprising when we take into consideration the multidimensional presentation of Biblical figures, who are also the kings of Israel and Judah.<sup>31</sup>

In this light, it is easy to understand the omission of Abimelech, who according to Judges 9:22 was the first king of Israel, by the author of the Books of Samuel and Kings.<sup>32</sup> If the first three kings – Saul, David, and Solomon – were a reflection of the last three patriarchs, then according to this conception there would be no place for Abimelech, the king before Saul, David, and Solomon, in the genealogies of the kings of Judah and Israel, even if the Book of Judges emphasized the meaning of the Davidic Dynasty.<sup>33</sup>

It is also easier to understand the curious division of the United Kingdom into Israel and Judah (1 Chronicles 12:1–20; 2 Chronicles 10).<sup>34</sup> What is most surprising here is the lack of solidarity on the part of Judah, which did not rebel, as well as Rehoboam's response itself, which is so ridiculous that it could not be authentic.<sup>35</sup> Archaeologists have doubts about the existence of the United Kingdom of Israel.<sup>36</sup> If there really was a revolt of ten generations

30 G. J. Wightman, *The Myth of Solomon*, „Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research” 277–278 (1990), p. 5–22, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1357372>.

31 H. Witzcyk, *Wielowymiarowa re-kreacja postaci literackich*, „Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia” 11 (2018) no. 2, p. 177–195, <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/BPTH.2018.009>.

32 Cf. B. P. Irwin, *Not Just Any King: Abimelech, the Northern Monarchy, and the Final Form of Judges*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 131 (2012) no. 3, p. 443–454, <https://doi.org/10.2307/23488248>.

33 M. Brettler, *The Book of Judges: Literature as Politics*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 108 (1989) no. 3, p. 395–418, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3267111>; cf. G. T. K. Wong, *Is there a Direct Pro-Judah Polemic in Judges?*, „Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament” 19 (2005) no. 1, p. 84–110, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09018320510032466>. However, see: S. Frolov, *Fire, Smoke, and Judah in Judges: A Response to Gregory Wong*, „Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament” 21 (2007) no. 1, p. 127–138, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09018320601171005>; cf. R. H. O'Connell, *The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges*, Leiden–New York–Köln 1996 (Vetus Testamentum Supplements, 63), <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004275874>.

34 Cf. U. Becker, *Die Reichsteilung nach I Reg 12*, „Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft” 112 (2000) no. 2, p. 210–229, <https://doi.org/10.1515/zatw.2000.112.2.210>; H. Seebass, *Zur Teilung der Herrschaft Salomos nach I Reg 11 29–39*, „Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft” 88 (1976) no. 3, p. 363–376, <https://doi.org/10.1515/zatw.1976.88.3.363>; E. Lipinski, *Le récit de 1 Rois XII 1–19 à la lumière de L'Ancien usage de l'Hébreu et de nouveaux textes de Mari*, „Vetus Testamentum” 24 (1974) no. 4, p. 430–437, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853374X000413>.

35 Cf. T. D. Cudworth, *The Division of Israel's Kingdom in Chronicles. A Re-examination of the Usual Suspects*, „Biblica” 95 (2014) no. 4, p. 498–523, <https://doi.org/10.2143/BIB.95.4.3186128>.

36 Z. Thomas, *Debating the United Monarchy: Let's See How Far We've Come*, „Biblical Theology Bulletin” 46 (2016) no. 2, p. 59–69, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146107916639208>; I. Finkelstein, *A Great United Monarchy? Archaeological and Historical Perspectives*, [in:] *One God – One Cult – One Nation*, ed. by R. Kratz, H. Spieckermann, Berlin–Boston 2010, p. 1–28, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9111-1\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9111-1_1).



against the Davidic Dynasty, it would not have to occur immediately after the death of Solomon. If that revolt of ten generations took place during the rule of Rehoboam and not before his ascent to the throne, then at least for some time he would rule over all the generations and in other words be the king of not only Judah but also Israel. Thus, there would be four, not three kings of the United Kingdom and they would not be a reflection of the three most important patriarchs of the patriarchal era. Thus, regardless of the historicity of the United Kingdom the Biblical author situates the revolt of ten generations immediately after Solomon's death but before Rehoboam's ascent to the throne so that only three kings would rule over all the generations. The artificiality of this technique is apparent to every careful reader of the Books of Kings and Chronicles.

According to Genesis 48:5–20, Manasseh and Ephraim played an important role among the generations of Israel.<sup>37</sup> This fragment also demonstrates that over time Ephraim took primacy over Manasseh (Genesis 48:14). The Book of Hosea 5:5 clearly indicates that there were not two, but three states: Judah, Israel, and Ephraim.<sup>38</sup> This book appears to be a credible historical source;<sup>39</sup> thus, speaking of two nations of God<sup>40</sup> is an error resulting from the use of only the narrative presented in the Books of Kings and Chronicles as a basis.<sup>41</sup>

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org/10.1515/9783110223583.1; see also the exchange of sentences: I. Finkelstein, *The Archaeology of the United Monarchy: an Alternative View*, „Levant” 28 (1996) no. 1, p. 177–187, <https://doi.org/10.1179/lev.1996.28.1.177>; A. Mazar, *Iron Age Chronology: A Reply to I. Finkelstein*, „Levant” 29 (1997) no. 1, p. 157–167, <https://doi.org/10.1179/lev.1997.29.1.157>; I. Finkelstein, *Bible Archaeology or Archaeology of Palestine in the Iron Age? A Rejoinder*, „Levant” 30 (1998) no. 1, p. 167–174, <https://doi.org/10.1179/lev.1998.30.1.167>; A. Mazar, J. Camp, *Will Tel Rehov Save the United Monarchy?*, „Biblical Archaeology Review” 26 (2000) no. 2, p. 38–51.

37 *Pismo Święte Starego i Nowego Testamentu w przekładzie z języków oryginalnych*, wyd. 5, Poznań–Warszawa 2014, footnote to Rdz 48, 5–20.

38 E. R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings. New Revised Edition*, Grand Rapids 1994, p. 61, footnote 1.

39 N. Na'aman, *The Book of Hosea as a Source for the Last Days of the Kingdom of Israel*, „Bibliche Zeitschrift” 59 (2015) no. 2, p. 232–256, <https://doi.org/10.1163/25890468-059-02-90000005>.

40 E.g. G. N. Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies*, vol. 1: *The Reign of Solomon and the Rise of Jeroboam*, Leiden 1993 (Harvard Semitic Monographs, 52), <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004369689>; G. N. Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies*, vol. 2: *The Reign of Jeroboam, the Fall of Israel, and the Reign of Josiah*, Leiden 1994 (Harvard Semitic Monographs, 53), <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004369696>; S. Gelander, *From Two Kingdoms To One Nation – Israel and Judah. Studies in Division and Unification*, Leiden 2011 (Studia Semitica Neerlandica, 56), <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004203464.i-260>.

41 Cf. e.g. K. W. Whitelam, *Revealing the History of Ancient Palestine*, London 2018 (Changing Perspectives, 8), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351260404>; J. Barr, *History and Ideology in the Old*

However, the Books of Kings and Chronicles present only two lines of kings: those of Israel and Judah, while Ephraim is completely omitted. The Books of Chronicles were written after the Book of Samuel and the Books of Kings<sup>42</sup> and are marked by a peculiar approach to history.<sup>43</sup> Unlike the Books of Kings, the Books of Chronicles do not recognize the legitimacy of Israel's authority, considering it to be an usurpation and schism with regards to Judah and Jerusalem.<sup>44</sup> This clear difference in the approach to the kingdom of Israel suggests that the concept of two genealogies – of the kings of Judah and Israel, although in reality for some time there existed three kingdoms: Judah, Israel, and Ephraim – is the work of the Biblical author of the Books of Kings. What is more, the legacy of Israel survived in the Bible of Judah.<sup>45</sup> The writing of the Books of Kings dates to the time of the Babylonian exile.<sup>46</sup> The simplest explanation of such a conception of the author of the Books of Kings is presuming that there was an encounter of the Babylonian diaspora of Judeans with the Assyrian diaspora of Israelites in Babylon.<sup>47</sup> This would

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*Testament: Biblical Studies at the End of a Millennium*, Oxford 2000, p. 59–101, <https://doi.org/10.1093/0198269870.001.0001>.

- 42 I. Kalimi, *An Ancient Israelite Historian. Studies in the Chronicler, His Time, Place and Writing*, Leiden 2005, p. 41–65 (*Studia Semitica Neerlandica*, 46), <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004358768>.
- 43 E. Zawiszwski, *Księgi Kronik – apologia czy historia*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 21 (1968) no. 4–5, p. 233–237, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.3142>; H. Witczyk, *Historyczno-prorockie tło Dzieła Kronikarskiego*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 49 (1996) no. 1, p. 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.793>.
- 44 H. G. M. Williamson, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles*, Cambridge 1977, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511557453>.
- 45 D. E. Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible. History, Politics, and the Reinscribing of Tradition*, Cambridge 2012, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139163033>.
- 46 P. Van Keulen, *Manasseh Through the Eyes of the Deuteronomists: The Manasseh Account (2 Kings 21:1–18) and the Final Chapters of the Deuteronomistic History*, Leiden 1996, p. 3–52 (*Oudtestamentische Studiën. Old Testament Studies*, 38); E. Eynikel, *The Reform of King Josiah and the Composition of the Deuteronomistic History*, Leiden 1995, p. 7–31 (*Oudtestamentische Studiën. Old Testament Studies*, 33); N. Na'aman, *The Contribution of Royal Inscriptions for a Re-Evaluation of the Book of Kings as a Historical Source*, „Journal for the Study of the Old Testament” 24 (1999) no. 82, p. 3–17, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030908929902408201>; M. Avioz, *The Book of Kings in Recent Research (Part I)*, „Currents in Biblical Research” 4 (2005) no. 1, p. 11–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476993X05055585>; C. Levin, *Das synchronistische Exzerpt aus den Annalen der Könige von Israel und Juda*, „Vetus Testamentum” 61 (2011) no. 4, p. 616–628, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853311X560772>; J. B. Łach, *Powstanie 1–2 Królów w świetle współczesnych badań biblijnych*, „Resovia Sacra” 13 (2006), p. 5–24.
- 47 W. Chrostowski, *Asyryjska diaspora Izraelitów jako wyzwanie dla biblistyki i asyriologii*, „Collectanea Theologica” 86 (2016) no. 3, p. 5–26, <http://dx.doi.org/10.21697/ct.2016.86.3.01>; W. Chrostowski, *Asyryjska diaspora Izraelitów w świetle Księgi Ezechiela – Wojciechowi Pikorowi*

explain the omission of the existence of the kingdom of Ephraim in the Books of Kings and, subsequently, in the Books of Chronicles as well.

The sum total of the years that the kings of Israel governed from the rule of Jehu to the fall of Samaria does not correspond to the actual number of years that the kingdom of Israel existed during this period. Some try to explain this by co-governance.<sup>48</sup> The kingdom of Israel ceased to exist a century and a half before Judah. Thus, there could have been fewer kings in the line of Israel than in Judah. This means that some may have been added on in order to achieve the intended number of twenty-two rulers of Israel. Instead of inventing them, the Biblical author could have included some kings of Ephraim in the genealogy of Israel. Jeroboam II of Israel, who is believed to have co-governed with Jehoash, is an example of this.<sup>49</sup> In reality, they could have ruled two different kingdoms: Israel and Ephraim (see: Hosea 5:5). Pekah could have played a similar role under the rule of Menahem and Pekahiah.<sup>50</sup> Including the kings of Ephraim in the Israelite genealogy caused seeming co-governance. It is also easier to understand the problem of kinship between Jehoram and Ahaziah;<sup>51</sup> some suggest that the Jehoram of Israel and the Jehoram of Judah are the same person.<sup>52</sup> This would mean that Jehoram was included in both genealogies. For the Biblical author, the number of twenty-two rulers in the genealogy was more important than the lack of consistence between the sum

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w odpowiedzi, „The Biblical Annals” 2 (2015) no. 1, p. 75–122, <https://doi.org/10.31743/ba>; W. Chrostowski, *Asyryjska diaspora Izraelitów i inne studia*, Warszawa 2003 (Rozprawy i Studia Biblijne, 10); W. Chrostowski, *Ogród Eden. Zapoznane świadectwo asyryjskiej diaspory*, Warszawa 1996 (Rozprawy i Studia Biblijne, 1).

- 48 E. g. E. Thiele, *Coregencies and Overlapping Reigns among the Hebrew Kings*, „Journal of Biblical Literature” 93 (1974) no. 2, p. 174–200, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3263092>.
- 49 E. R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings. New Revised Edition*, Grand Rapids 1994, p. 62–63.
- 50 Ibidem, p. 63.
- 51 W. Barrick, *Another Shaking of Jehoshaphat’s Family Tree: Jehoram and Ahaziah Once Again*, „Vetus Testamentum” 51 (2001) no. 1, p. 9–25, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853301300102174>; D. Etz, *The Genealogical Relationships of Jehoram and Ahaziah, and of Ahaz and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah*, „Journal for the Study of the Old Testament” 21 (1996) no. 71, p. 39–53, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030908929602107104>.
- 52 P. K. McCarter, “Yaw, Son of ‘Omri’: A Philological Note on Israelite Chronology”, „Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research” 216 (1974), p. 5–7, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1356327>; J. Strange, *Joram, King of Israel and Judah*, „Vetus Testamentum” 25 (1975) no. 2, p. 191–201, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1517266>; E. R. Thiele, *An Additional Chronological Note on “Yaw, Son of ‘Omri”*, „Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research” 222 (1976), p. 19–23, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1356296>; M. Weippert, *Jau(a) Mar Aumri – Joram Oder Jehu Von Israel?*, „Vetus Testamentum” 28 (1978) no. 1, p. 113–118, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853378X00356>.

total of the years these rulers ruled and the actual time the kingdom of Israel existed during this time.

At this point, it is worth recalling that the Bible is neither a history textbook nor a chronicle of the people of Israel, as the maximalists approach it.<sup>53</sup> It also is not literary fiction from a later period, as the minimalists believe.<sup>54</sup> Instead, it is a work of theology that contains truth that in accordance with God's will was immortalized for our salvation<sup>55</sup> and is a kind of tool of dialogue with God.<sup>56</sup> The discussions of scholars show that they do not understand the nature of Sacred Scripture.<sup>57</sup> The truth of Sacred Scripture does not result from its historical precision, but instead is the fruit of inspiration by the Holy Spirit.<sup>58</sup> This does not preclude the historical value of the Bible.<sup>59</sup> The author of the Books of Samuel and Kings probably used the sources that were at his disposal, which may have been available in the Jerusalem Temple.<sup>60</sup> The main sources were the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel and Judah.<sup>61</sup> He also may have made use

53 Ex.: I. W. Provan, V. P. Long, T. Longman, *A Biblical History of Israel*, Louisville 2003.

54 E.g. N. P. Lemche, *The Origin of the Israelite State – A Copenhagen Perspective on the Emergence of Critical Historical Studies of Ancient Israel in Recent Times*, „Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament” 12 (1998) no. 1, p. 44–63, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09018329808585127>; R. B. Coote, *Early Israel*, „Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament” 5 (1991) no. 2, p. 35–46, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09018329108584971>; K. W. Whitelam, *Between History and Literature: The Social Production of Israel's Traditions of Origin*, „Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament” 5 (1991) no. 2, p. 60–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09018329108584973>.

55 M. Majewski, *Prawda historyczna Pisma Świętego. Refleksja na kanwie nowego dokumentu Papieskiej Komisji Biblijnej*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 68 (2015) no. 3, p. 237–264, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.20>.

56 S. Wronka, *Pismo Święte narzędziem dialogu z Bogiem*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 69 (2016) no. 4, p. 355–375, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.256>.

57 Cf. A. Tobolowsky, *Israelite and Judahite History in Contemporary Theoretical Approaches*, „Currents in Biblical Research” 17 (2018) no. 1, p. 33–58, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476993X18765117>; Z. Zevit, *Three Debates about Bible and Archaeology*, „Biblica” 83 (2002) no. 1, p. 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.2143/BIB.83.1.3200291>.

58 H. Witczyk, *Prawda Pisma Świętego jako owoc natchnienia*, „Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 68 (2015) no. 2, p. 101–124, <https://doi.org/10.21906/rbl.13>.

59 Papieska Komisja Biblijna, *Natchnienie i prawda Pisma Świętego*, Kielce 2014.

60 N. Na'aman, *The Temple Library of Jerusalem and the Composition of the Book of Kings*, [in:] *Congress Volume Leiden 2004*, ed. A. Lemaire, Leiden–Boston 2006, p. 129–152 (*Vetus Testamentum Supplements*, 109), [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047408772\\_008](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047408772_008).

61 Cf. M. Haran, *The books of the chronicles 'of the kings of Judah' and 'of the kings of Israel': what sort of books were they?*, „Vetus Testamentum” 49 (1999) no. 2, p. 156–164, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853399774228948>.

of royal inscriptions.<sup>62</sup> Thus, his work contains much historical data. However, he was not a historian in the modern sense, but an outstanding theologian; hence the dissonance between Biblical and historical Israel.<sup>63</sup> The Biblical chronology of the kings of Israel and Judah is not a factographic calque of the history of Israel, but a theological work of the Biblical author. Its purpose was to show that both Judah and Israel are the true Chosen People, while the age of the kings, like the patriarchal age, is a full and completed period in history.

## Abstract

### A Contribution to the Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah

The letters of kings are the result of the Biblical author's intended composition. Beginning with Saul to Hosea for Israel as well as David to Zedekiah for the Davidic dynasty, each genealogy consists of twenty-two rulers. This number is not accidental, as there are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet as well as 22 patriarchs from Adam to Jacob. In order to attain this number of rulers in each kingdom, some kings could have been omitted or added. The letters of the kings of Israel and Judah thus do not reflect chronological reality.

**Keywords:** king, Judah, Israel, chronology

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62 N. Na'aman, *Royal Inscriptions and the Histories of Joash and Ahaz, Kings of Judah*, „Vetus Testamentum” 48 (1998) no. 3, p. 333–349, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1568533982722414>; however, see: S. Parker, *Did the Authors of the Books of Kings Make Use of Royal Inscriptions?*, „Vetus Testamentum” 50 (2000) no. 3, p. 357–378, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853300506422>.

63 Cf. R. G. Kratz, *Historical and Biblical Israel: The History, Tradition, and Archives of Israel and Judah*, Oxford 2015, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198728771.001.0001>; M. Liverani, *Israel's History and the History of Israel*, London 2007, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315710433>; cf. Z. Pawłowski, *Historia i teologia w 1 i 2 Księdze Królewskiej*, „Teologia i Człowiek” 7–8 (2006), p. 227–238.

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