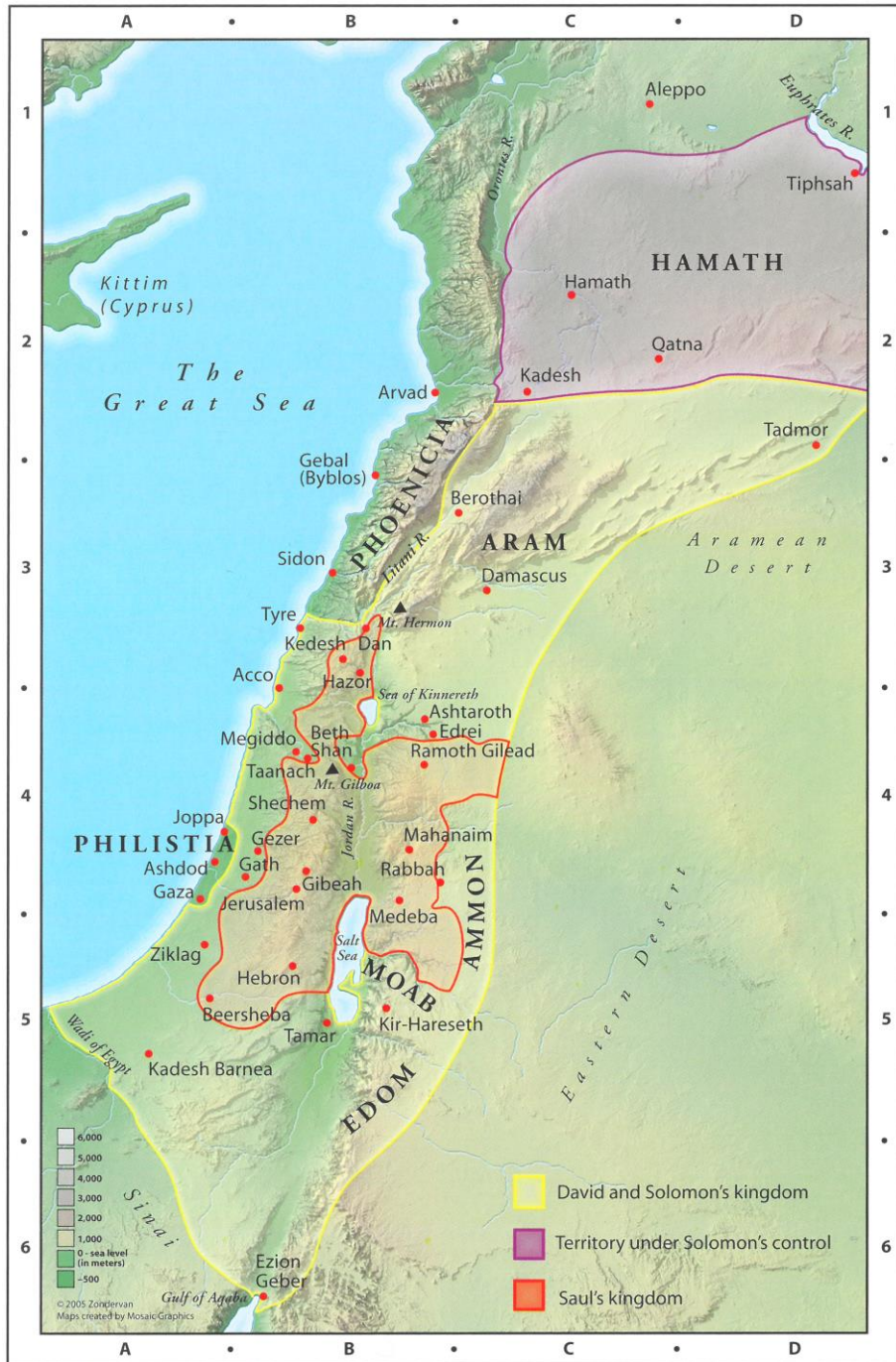


Map 5: KINGDOM OF DAVID AND SOLOMON



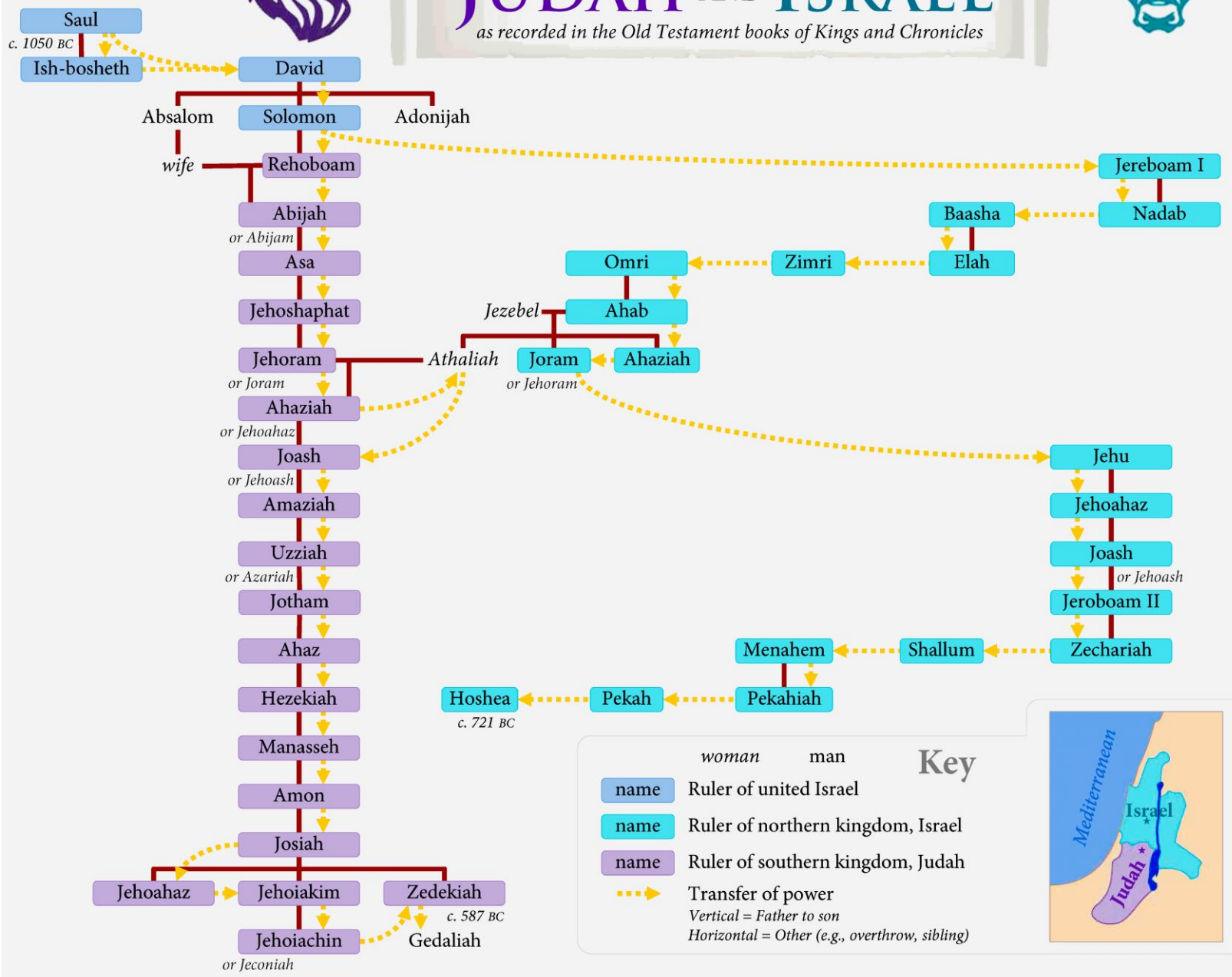
Map 6: KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH





GENEALOGY OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

as recorded in the Old Testament books of Kings and Chronicles



The History of the Northern Kingdom

1 KINGS 13 The northern kingdom is variously called **Samaria** (after its capital), Ephraim (after its dominant tribe) or Israel. Nineteen kings, representing nine different families, reigned there for a combined period of 208 years.

After Solomon's death (930 B.C.) Jeroboam I led the northern tribes to separate from Judah (under Rehoboam) and to establish Israel as a separate kingdom. Jeroboam built a capital at Tirzah ("Map 4") and set up golden calves in Bethel and Dan (both "Map 6") to rival worship in Jerusalem.¹ But he lost territory in **Moab** and Syria,² and tensions smoldered between Israel and Judah for half a century. Jeroboam's son Nadab was assassinated by Baasha.

Israel fell into disorder. Baasha exacerbated tensions with King Asa of Judah by fortifying Ramah, near Jerusalem, to which Asa responded by hiring Syria's Ben-Hadad to attack Israel (1Ki 15:16–22). Baasha's dynasty ended when Zimri killed his son Elah. After a seven-day reign, Zimri burned the palace, with himself inside, at Tirzah.³

Israel returned to power and stability under Omri (884–873 B.C.), who bested Tibni in a four-year civil war and established a capital at Samaria ("Map 4"). He warred continually against Syria, subdued Moab, made peace with Judah and entered into a trade alliance with **Phoenicia**, resulting in the mar-

riage of his son Ahab to Jezebel, daughter of the Sidonian king.⁴ Revolts in Moab plagued the Omrides (Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah and Jehoram), and Samaria was fortified heavily against attacks from Syria-Damascus.⁵ These same kingdoms, however, cooperated with one another when their personal interests were at stake. A temporary alliance of Syrian-Palestinian states pitted itself against Assyria at the battle of Qarqar (853 B.C.).⁶

The Omride dynasty was characterized by apostasy. During this time the prophets Elijah and Elisha confronted the religious policies of Israel's kings. Jezebel introduced the worship of Baal-Melqart, and this cult was promoted by Omride kings until the usurper Jehu executed Omri's descendants, along with Jezebel and the prophets of Baal (841 B.C.).

The fourth-dynasty kings (Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II and Zechariah; 2Ki 10:30), despite a temporary suppression of the Baal cult (2Ki 10:18–27), maintained the worship of the golden calves of Jeroboam I. Syria and Assyria continued to menace Israel over the next 50 years. Israel was greatly reduced in territory and military resources and regularly paid tribute to Assyria. But Assyria, after considerably weakening Damascus (Syria), suffered its own period of vulnerability. With its two principal enemies in a diminished state, Israel's Jeroboam II was able to regain some territory. This period

ended when Shallum assassinated Jeroboam II's successor, Zechariah.

Israel then fell rapidly into chaos and crisis. Shallum was assassinated by Menahem, and a fifth dynasty (Menahem and Pekahiah) briefly came to power around 746 B.C. Anti-Assyrian sentiment flared after Menahem exacted a head-tax to pay tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III.⁷ Following a coup d'état, Pekah seized control of Israel, forming an anti-Assyrian alliance with Syria's Rezin. Pekah and Rezin pressured Ahaz of Judah to join them and attacked Jerusalem when he resisted. Ahaz sent tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III, king of a resurgent Assyria, seeking help, to which Assyria responded by sweeping down over northern Israel and Damascus. Rezin was killed and his subjects deported to Assyria.⁸

A new usurper seized Israel's throne: Hoshea assassinated Pekah and ruled in his place. Soon after the death of Tiglath-Pileser III (727 B.C.), Hoshea withheld tribute from Assyria. Shalmaneser V, successor to Tiglath-Pileser III, imprisoned Hoshea and put Samaria under siege.⁹ With the fall of the city (722 B.C.) and the deportation of its population, the northern kingdom came to an end.

The northern kingdom was noteworthy in three ways:

- ❖ It was powerful relative to Judah.
- ❖ It was idolatrous.
- ❖ It was politically unstable.

The History of the Southern Kingdom

2 KINGS 7 The southern kingdom of Judah came into being when the northern ten tribes broke away from the **united monarchy** in approximately 930 B.C. (1Ki 12:1–24). The remaining kingdom, consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, retained Jerusalem, the capital of the united monarchy, as its capital.

Twenty kings ruled the southern kingdom throughout its 345-year span. All were from the line of David, with one exception—Athaliah, daughter of Ahab, king of the northern kingdom (2Ki 8:18). She married into the royal Judean family and became queen for six years, from 841–835 B.C. (ch. 11). Of those twenty kings, seven are attested in records outside the Bible.¹ In addition, seals or seal impressions have been discovered for fifteen Judean officials and priests named in the Bible.²

In the fifth year of Rehoboam, the first king of the southern kingdom after the division of the land, Egypt's Pharaoh Shishak campaigned against Judah, plundering the temple and the royal palace (2Ch 12:1–9).

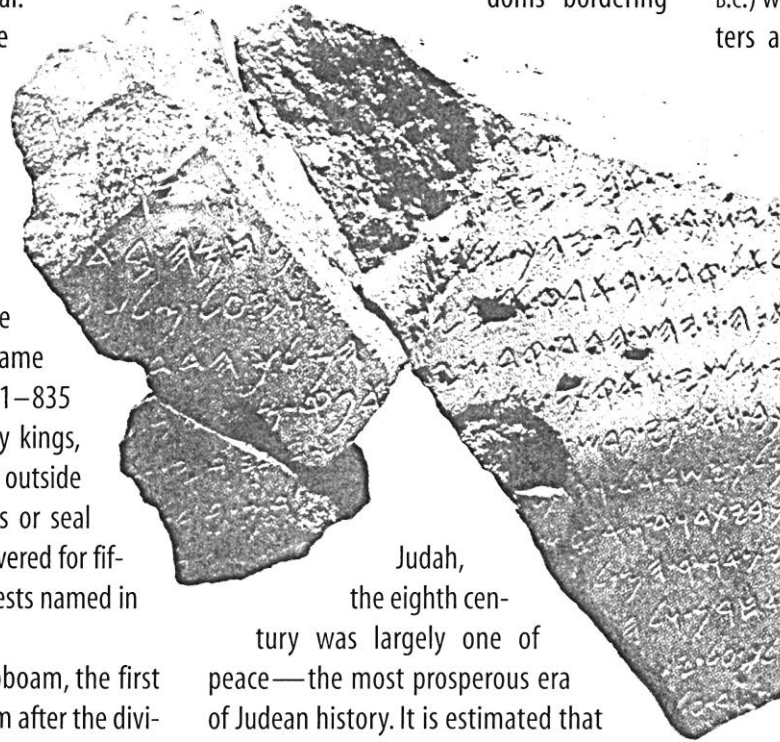
Inscribed on a wall of the temple of Amon in Thebes, Egypt (see the map of Egypt on p. 346), is a list of places Shishak conquered.³ Rehoboam was compelled to buy off Shishak with a large payment of tribute.

While the ninth century B.C. saw skirmishes with the small kingdoms bordering

environs. All of this changed, however, with the coming of the **Assyrians** during the last quarter of the century.

In 701 B.C. Sennacherib ravaged Judah (2Ki 18:13),⁴ and for the next half century Judah was dominated by Assyria. When this world power grew weak, Josiah (641–609 B.C.) was able to focus again on internal matters and to lead a religious revival (2Ch 34:3—35:19).⁵ From 609–605 B.C.

the southern kingdom was subject to Egypt (2Ki 23:31–35). With the defeat of Pharaoh Neco at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C.,⁶ Jerusalem fell under Babylonian domination. Nebuchadnezzar crushed one rebellion at Jerusalem in 597 B.C. (24:10–16)⁷ and 11 years later destroyed the city, bringing the southern kingdom to an end (25:1–21).⁸



Judah, the eighth century was largely one of

peace—the most prosperous era of Judean history. It is estimated that the population of the southern kingdom was 120,000–150,000 at this time, with the majority of people living in Jerusalem and its

The “House of David” inscription from Tel Dan

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