



## UNIT 6 – LESSON 6

### THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

#### 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF JUDAH

The kingdom of Judah, like Israel, began in 922 B.C., but lasted a longer period than Israel. Judah ended with the fall of Jerusalem and subsequent exile in 587 B.C., though the last years were clouded by Babylonian dominance. These events are recorded in 1 Kings 12 – 11 Kings 25. Nineteen kings and one queen ruled during the nation's existence. As for Israel, the historian records a verdict on these kings and they fall into 3 classes:

- Two kings were given the historian's unqualified approval, Hezekiah and Josiah.
- Six kings were good, but this was qualified by their failure to remove the high places, i.e., centres of worship and sacrifice outside Jerusalem. The problem with such places was they were the first to degenerate into syncretistic practices, mixing foreign worship with the worship of Yahweh.
- Twelve rulers were said to be evil.

Judgement finally came to Judah, as it had to Israel, for the nation's sins against Yahweh. A series of prophets warned of impending judgement but the nation continued its stubborn refusal to observe the pure worship of Yahweh. Josiah's re-discovery of Deuteronomy was an opportune event, calling the nation to purify itself and warning of judgement to come for sin against Yahweh. After Josiah Judah brought upon itself the force of the Deuteronomic curses.

**2. THE KINGS OF JUDAH**

<u>KING</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>IMPORTANT EVENTS</u>	
Rehoboam	1 Kings 12	922-915	1. Monarchy divided under him. He ruled Judah from Jerusalem. 2. Judah fell into Canaanite practices under him - possibly under influence of mother, an Ammonitess (1Kings 14:21-24).	EVIL
Abijah (Abijam)	1 Kings 15:1-8	915-913	Walked in the sins of his father.	EVIL
Asa	1 Kings 15:9-24	913-873	Religious reform. (1 Kings 15:12-13). 1. Removal of cult. 2. Queen mother deposed for idolatry. But high places not taken away.	GOOD
Jehoshaphat	1 Kings 22:41-50	873-849	1. Peace with Israel. 2. Tried to promote trade from Ezion Geber, but shipwreck prevented this. But high places not taken away.	GOOD
Jehoram (Joram)	2 Kingss 8:16-24	849-842	Edom's revolt from Judah's control.	EVIL
Ahaziah	2 Kings 8:25-29 9:1-27	842	1. Related by marriage to Israel and followed ways of Israelite kings. 2. Killed in battle by servants of Jehu.	EVIL
Athaliah	2 Kings 11:1-16	842-837	1. Mother of Ahaziah and daughter of Ahab. 2. Baal worship prevalent.	EVIL
Jehoash (Joash)	2 Kings 11:21-12:21	837-800	Revolt against Athaliah. 1 But high places not taken away. 2. Religious reforms (temple repairs). 3. Influence of Jehoiada the priest. 4. Invading Syrians bought off with temple treasure. 5. Joash killed in a conspiracy.	GOOD
<u>KING</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>IMPORTANT EVENTS</u>	



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Amaziah	2 Kings 14:1-20	800-783	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. But high places not removed.</li> <li>2. Took vengeance on his father's murderers.</li> <li>3. Victory over Edom (v.10).</li> <li>4. Warfare against Israel: Judah defeated and Amaziah captured.</li> <li>5. Killed in palace revolt. He fled to Lachish but was killed there</li> </ol>	GOOD
Uzziah	2 Kings 14:21-22 2 Kings 15:1-7	783-742	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. But did not take away high places.</li> <li>2. King smitten with leprosy. 2 Chron. 26 tells us it was for burning incense on altar. Only priests could do this.</li> <li>3. Military victories over Philistines and Ammonites (11 Chron.27).</li> <li>4. Isaiah prophesying.</li> </ol>	GOOD
Jotham	2 Kings 15:5  2 Kings 15:32-38	750-742 (Regent) 742-735 (King)	<p>Regent in place of Uzziah.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. But high places not removed.</li> <li>2. Building projects (2 Chr.27).</li> <li>3. Victory over Ammonites (2 Chron.27).</li> <li>4. Isaiah and Micah prophesying.</li> </ol>	GOOD
Jehoahaz 1	2 Kings 16:1-20	735-715	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Israel fell during his reign.</li> <li>2. Ahaz sought Assyria's help when attacked by Israel and Syria. The price was to become a vassal of Assyria.</li> <li>3. Ahaz copies altar of Damascus and had it placed in the Temple. Syncretism.</li> <li>4. Isaiah and Micah prophesying.</li> </ol>	EVIL
Hezekiah	2 Kings 18-20	715-687	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unqualified approval (18:3-6)</li> <li>2. Religious reform: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Cleansing of temple (2 Chron. 29).</li> <li>b) Passover (2 Chron.30).</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Independence from Assyria?</li> <li>4. Building programme (2 Kings 20:20)</li> <li>5. Isaiah and Micah Prophesying.</li> </ol>	GOOD

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Manasseh	2 Kings 21:1-18	687-642	1. Foreign worship and the occult. 2. Manasseh taken to Assyria, possibly involved in Civil war (2 Chr.33:11).	EVIL
Amon	2 Kings 21:19-27	642-640	1. Walked in his father's ways. 2. Killed in conspiracy.	EVIL
Josiah	2 Kings 22:1-23;30	640-609	1. Approval unqualified (22:1; 23:24,25) 2. Book of law discovered during his reign (This was probably Deuteronomy). 3. Religious reform including Passover. 4. Killed in battle against Egyptians. 5. Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Nahum prophesying. 6. Nineveh fell to Medo-Babylonian alliance 612 B.C.	GOOD
Jehoahaz II (Shallum)	2 Kings 23:31-34	609	1. Reigned only 3 months 2. Deposed and imprisoned by Pharaoh Neco. 3. Judah became tributary of Egypt. 4. Jeremiah prophesying.	EVIL
Jehoiakim (Eliakim)	2 Kings 23:34 24:5	609-598	1. Son of Josiah. 2. Tributary of Egypt, placed on throne by Pharaoh Neco. 3. Jeremiah and Habakkuk prophesying.	EVIL
Jeroiachin	2 Kings 24:6-17	598-597	1. Babylon now dominant power, having defeated Egypt. 2. Babylonian invasion of Judah and siege (for withholding tribute). 3. Jehoiachin, family and officials deported to Babylonia. 4. Many people deported. 5. Temple treasures plundered. 6. Jeremiah prophesying.	EVIL
Zedekiah (Mattaniah)	11 Kings 24:18-	597-587	1. Reigned as Babylonian vassal.	EVIL



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2. Rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar under Egyptian influence.
3. Siege of Jerusalem from 598-587.
4. Second deportation of people when Jerusalem fell.
5. Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesying.



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**3. SOME CONCLUDING POINTS**

- (1) There was terrible destruction in Jerusalem when the siege ended in Babylonian victory. The main public buildings were destroyed by fire, including Solomon's temple. The temple treasures were taken to Babylon.
- (2) The fall of Jerusalem marked the end of the Davidic monarchy in Judah. There were some kings in the post-exilic period, but the monarchy did not occupy the position of authority and respect of the pre-exilic period.

**QUESTION 1**

What were the characteristic sins of Judah?

**QUESTION 2**

To what extent was the character of the king responsible for the character of the nation?

**QUESTION 3**

What were the main reforming measures of Hezekiah? Why do you think the nation relapsed into evil after this?

**QUESTION 4**

What were the main reforming measures of Josiah?

**QUESTION 5**

Read 2 Kings 24:8 – 25:17 and give a brief description of the sad ending of the temple at Jerusalem.

**GROUP STUDY QUESTION:**

Read Deut. 11:26-32 and Deut.28

What do you think "Deuteronomistic Principle" and "Deuteronomistic Curse and blessing" means?

What was Josiah's reaction when he learned he and his nation had broken this covenant? (2 Chron 34:19; 22;29;31).

What can we learn from Josiah's reaction?