

Rehoboam and Beyond

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BIG SANDY, Texas—In last week's article, we discussed the early kings of the northern tribes of Israel—19 men from Jeroboam through Hosea. At that time, we noticed how the vast majority of them walked in the unsuccessful footsteps of Jeroboam.

In this week's article, I will look at the early kings of the southern tribe of Judah—20 people from Rehoboam to Zedekiah.

10 tribes separated

Notice some of the events leading up to the separation by the northern 10 tribes from Judah.

- Solomon died (1 Kings 11:41-43).
- Jeroboam recommended to Rehoboam that he not be as burdensome on the people as Solomon had been (1 Kings 12:3-4).
- Rehoboam consulted the elders of the community, who advised him to be the servant of the people. Rehoboam ignored their advice (1 Kings 12:6-7).
- Rehoboam consulted the younger men of the community, who advised him to increase the burdens on the people. Rehoboam agreed with their advice (1 Kings 12:8-14).
- Israel followed Jeroboam instead of Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:15-20).

Rehoboam's reign

Notice this descriptive summary about the reign of Rehoboam.

1 Kings 14:22-24—"Now Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked Him to jealousy with their sins which they committed, more than all that their fathers had done. For they also built for themselves high places, sacred pillars, and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. And there were also perverted persons in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel."

1 Kings 14:30—"And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days."

List of Judah's kings

When a Bible student reviews a list of the early kings of Judah, he notices the contrast between poor reviews and good evaluations.

- Abijam: 1 Kings 15:3—sins of Rehoboam
- Asa: 1 Kings 15:11—likened positively to David
- Jehoshaphat: 1 Kings 15:43—likened positively to Asa
- Jehoram: 2 Kings 8:18—likened negatively to Ahab of Israel
- Ahaziah: 2 Kings 8:27—likened negatively to Ahab of Israel
- Athaliah: 2 Kings 11:1—woman who killed many male heirs
- Joash: 2 Kings 11:17—young ruler who enjoyed positive time as long as priest Jehoiada was alive
- Amaziah: 2 Kings 14:3-4—some good, some mistakes
- Azariah: 2 Kings 15:3-4—some good, some mistakes
- Jotham: 2 Kings 15:34-35—some good, some mistakes
- Ahaz: 2 Kings 16:3-4—likened negatively to kings of Israel
- Hezekiah: 2 Kings 18:3-7—likened positively to David
- Manasseh: 2 Kings 21:2-6—negative
- Amon: 2 Kings 21:20-22—likened negatively to Manasseh
- Josiah: 2 Kings 22:2—likened positively to David
- Jehoahaz: 2 Kings 23:32—negative
- Jehoiakim: 2 Kings 23:37—negative
- Jehoiachin: 2 Kings 24:9—negative
- Zedekiah: 2 Kings 24:19—negative like Jehoiakim