

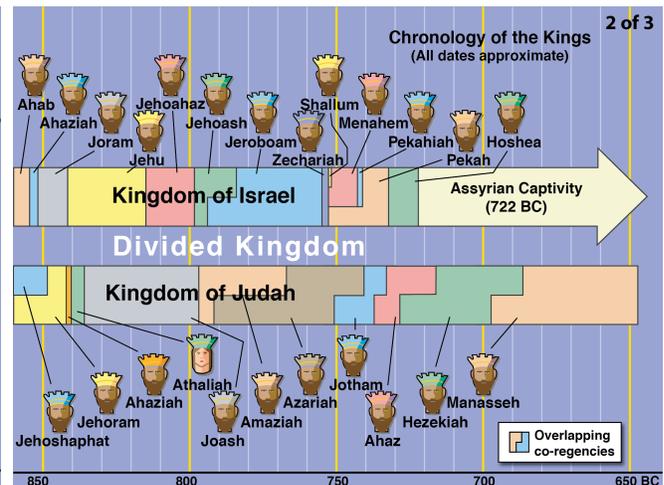
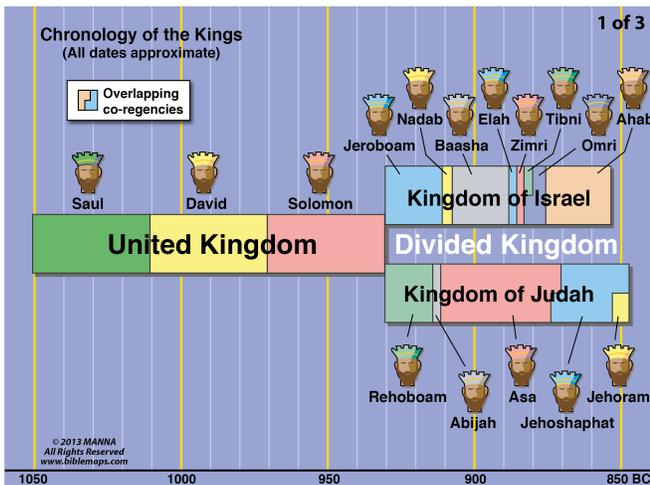
For more than 200 years, from Jeroboam to Hoshea, the kingdom of Israel had king after king that failed to lead God's people in the way they should go.

- ✿ Take a moment to remind yourself of what God had told the children of Israel all the way back in **Deuteronomy 28**, especially **28:15-68**, before they ever went into the Promised Land. What had he told them would happen if they failed to obey him?

2 Kings 17:6 sadly summarizes for us the end of the northern kingdom of Israel when the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria. Why did this happen? **2 Kings 17:7-22** provides the explanation.

- ✿ The people of Israel had _____ against the LORD their God (**17:7**)
- ✿ They lived _____ the nations whom the LORD had driven out (**17:8**)
- ✿ They worshiped and served _____ (**17:9-12, 15-17**)
- ✿ They wouldn't _____ to the warnings of God's messengers (**17:13-14**)

"Therefore the LORD was very _____ with Israel and removed them out of his sight... So Israel was _____ from their own land to Assyria" (**17:18, 23**).



Meanwhile, the southern kingdom of Judah began to be ruled by a young man named Hezekiah. Listen to the very different way he is described:

He did what was _____ in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze _____ that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it (it was called Nehushtan). He _____ in the LORD, the God of Israel, so that there was none like him among all the kings of Judah after him, nor among those who were before him. For he held _____ to the LORD. He did not depart from following him, but kept the commandments that the LORD commanded Moses. (2 Kings 18:3-6)

But this was a very challenging time, even for the kingdom of Judah. 2 Kings 18:13-37 describes the attacks of Sennacherib king of Assyria against Judah and his bold threats that Jerusalem was going to fall just like Samaria. Like Jehoshaphat before him (2 Chronicles 20), when Hezekiah didn't know what to do against such an incredible threat, he prayed:

"O LORD, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you _____, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made the heavens and the earth. Incline your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were _____ gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. Therefore they were destroyed. So now, O LORD _____ God, save us, please, from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may _____ that you, O LORD, are God alone." (19:15-19)

And that night? The angel of the LORD went out and struck down _____ in the camp of the Assyrians (19:35-37).

2 Kings 20 describes Hezekiah eventually becoming sick to the point of death. He was even encouraged by Isaiah the prophet to set his house in order, "for you shall die; you shall not recover."

- ✿ What did Hezekiah do when he got this news?

- ✿ What are we seeing and hearing during Hezekiah's reign that is so different from what could be seen over the course of 200 years to the north in Israel? What should we see, understand, and apply as we notice that contrast?

- ✿ What have you seen and heard in 2 Kings 17-20 that makes you appreciate Jesus our King even more?