

2 Kings 1-10 & 2 Chronicles 21-22

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Ahaziah

- In our story last week, we learned about the evil king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Ahab, and his wife Jezebel.
- When Ahab died, his son Ahaziah was made king. However, he fell through a window and was injured.
- He sent messengers to ask Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron if he would survive.
 - Baal-zebub means “lord of the fly.” Based on other usages, this deity's actual name could have been Ba'al-zebul, "lord of the (heavenly) dwelling", and Ba'al-zebub could have been a derogatory pun used by the Israelites, referring to the flies that hang around dung piles.
- Elijah the prophet intercepted the messengers and told them to tell the king he would die because he did not inquire of God.
- 2 Kings 1:8 - “He was a hairy man with a leather belt worn around his waist.”
 - John the Immerser
- Three captains of fifty men
- 2 Kings 1:17 — Ahaziah died, but since he had no son his brother Jehoram became king.

Elijah Taken to Heaven

- Elijah told Elisha, “Stay here” multiple times
- Prophets tried to alert Elisha about what was going to happen, but he already knew
 - and kept it to himself.
- 2 Kings 2:9 — “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me
 - פִּי־שְׁנַיִם בְּרוּחַךְ אֵלַי, *pi shenayim b'ruchacha eilai*, “may twice as much as your spirit be mine,”
 - Rabbi Chaim Jachter discusses this event in his commentary on the books of Kings, *From David to Destruction*.
 - “How could one be twice as great as Elijah the Prophet? Elijah is a once in forever personality. He is the one designated by the Lord to announce the arrival of Messiah, as stated at the end of the book of Malachi... As great as Elisha is, he does not fill [the role of Elijah]. Accordingly, what can he possibly mean by this seemingly audacious (and even outrageous) request to have twice the spirit of Elijah?”
 - Rabbi Jachter then passes along two opinions from earlier rabbis about what this request means.
 - Ralbag (Rabbi Levi ben Gershon, who lived in the 1300s) explains that “Pi Shenayim” in this context should be interpreted in light of its usage in Deuteronomy 21:17, where the double portion of the firstborn (the “Bechor”) is described with the same words, “Pi Shenayim.” Elisha wants help and support to emerge as the “Bechor” of the other prophets— the primary student and clear successor to Elijah the Prophet.

- Radak (Rabbi David Kimhi, early 1200s) points out that Elisha performs twice as many miracles as Elijah. For example, Elijah revives only one person from the dead, whereas Elisha revives two people from the dead. Thus, Elisha does not aspire to the impossible goal of reaching twice the level of prophecy as Elijah, but rather simply the performance of twice the amount of miracles.
- Rabbi Jachter then suggests that in addition to being respected by the other prophets, Elisha also seeks to make an impact on the broader community, something Elijah never achieved. And Elisha does seem to have a greater impact than Elijah in that way, based on the stories we have been given.
- Rabbi Jachter then says that it is “enormously important for us to harbor high ambitions. Elisha does not think small. When faced with an impromptu last request for Elijah, Elisha makes a great appeal. When given the opportunity, Elisha makes an immediate grand request to facilitate his new role as Elijah’s successor. So, don’t be afraid to think big.”
- On the flip side of that, we see Elijah trying to make his own exit a private event: dissuading Elisha from following him, and going to a remote location.
 - Unlike the big display Elijah led on Mount Carmel, where he sought to publicize the preeminence of God, Elijah is reluctant to publicize his own dramatic exit.
 - Rabbi Jachter says, “We are generous in publicizing Hashem’s role in the world.... While sometimes it is necessary for us to publicize our achievements, it is often best to adopt a more modest approach, as Elijah the Prophet does when he exits the world.”
- Note Elisha’s reaction:
 - 2 Kings 2:12 — Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.
 - This is a sign of mourning in Judaism.
- The well at Jericho
 - Elisha’s first communal act as the successor to Elijah is to provide water, whereas Elijah’s first act is to withhold water.
 - In many ways, Elisha is shown as a softer prophet compared to Elijah.
- The young boys and the bears
 - The Talmud (Sotah 46b) offers some thoughts about the young lads who taunted Elisha:
 - 1. They had previously earned their living by providing the city of Jericho with water. Elisha sweetened the city’s own water, rendering their services unnecessary.
 - 2. The text uses the term “young lads”, but you would expect it only to say one or the other in Hebrew. The implication, the sages teach, is that they were lads, that is, already of age, but they disgraced themselves like young children.
- Also, while Elisha is softer than Elijah, he is still involved in some violent events that were ordained by God.
 - Remember what God told Elijah when He commanded that Elijah pick Elisha as his successor in 1 Kings 19:17:
 - And it shall come about that the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall put to death.

- Note also that Elisha does not kill them, he curses them in God's name. It is God who brings about the punishment.
- Also, Elisha is newly appointed as the leader of Elijah's school of prophets. If he is to be taken seriously, Elisha must establish his authority and his intolerance towards abuse.

Jehoram

- **[Read 2 Kings 3:1-3]**
- Son of Ahab, brother of Ahaziah
- First, we are told that Jehoram "did evil in the sight of the LORD"
- Why? Because while he took the unprecedented step of removing the worship of Ba'al, redirecting the people of Israel back to the God of Israel, we are also told that "he clung to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat."
 - What does that mean? He continued to keep the altars to God and the golden calf idols in Bethel and Dan (1 Kings 12:28–30)
 - instead of having the people take their offerings to the Temple in Jerusalem
- Jehoram is shown as a king who is only willing to go so far, stopping short of true obedience.

Battle with the Moabites

- **[SLIDE]** The Moabites had been paying Ahab tribute, but Mesha (מֶשָׁא), the Moabite king, decided to rebel against Israel
- Jehoram decides to get them back as a vassal state, and calls on the king of Judah, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom, both of whom were weaker than the kingdom of Israel, to help him.
- They decided to go the long way around, all the way south of the Dead Sea through Edom, and, in the middle of the desert with three armies, ran out of water to drink.
- Jehoshaphat, a righteous king, asked if there was a prophet who could help them. Elisha was there, so Jehoram called him.
- Elisha shows up, refuses at first to work with Jehoram
 - 2 Kings 3:13 — Go to your father's prophets and your mother's prophets
 - Remember his father and mother were Ahab and Jezebel, very evil rulers who led the Kingdom of Israel astray
 - However, Elisha finally consents to help, saying, "if I did not respect Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look at you nor see you." (2 Kings 3:14)
- God miraculously provided water, filling up trenches with water in the bottom of the wadi.
- Elisha also predicts that Jehoram will defeat the Moabites, and, presumably because of the evil of Moab, even gives them permission to cut down the fruit trees as part of their destruction (2 Kings 3:9), despite the injunction against doing that normally during war (Deuteronomy 20:19–20)
- The Moabites arrive to where the armies are camped in the night, think the water is blood and the armies all fought one another, and went down to get the spoils. However, they are defeated and run away to Kir-hareseth.

- The Israelites followed, destroying towns, throwing stones in every field (thousands of them), and filling in all the wells.
- When they got to Kir-hareseth, Mesha did something absolutely detestable: He sacrificed his firstborn son on top of the wall in full view of the army of Israel.
- The text says, “And great anger came upon Israel, and they departed from him and returned to their own land.” (2 Kings 3:27)
- Why would they leave? why not stay and wipe out the Moabites and this evil king Mesha?
- The text doesn’t give an explicit answer, but the ancient sages point back to Jehoram’s nature:
 - He was a quitter. He was more than happy to follow God... up to a point.
 - Remember, he didn’t finish the job of redirecting the Jews in the Northern Kingdom back to God. He stopped short of the goal.
 - Maybe the battle with Mesha was a breaking point for him. If this guy is willing to sacrifice his own son, maybe we should just leave him alone.
- It doesn’t make sense logically, given the fact that the armies of Israel, Judah, and Edom were so powerful, but the story is just left open ended.

The Mesha Stele

- **[SLIDE]** We now get to one of the many archaeological discoveries we’ll be talking about tonight: the Mesha Stele (also known as the Moabite Stone)
 - <https://armstronginstitute.org/102-mesha-stele>
 - <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-artifacts/inscriptions/the-mesha-stele-and-king-david-of-the-bible/>
 - <https://library.biblicalarchaeology.org/article/meshas-stele-and-the-house-of-david/>
- Most scholars believe that King Mesha created the stele between 830 and 810 BCE and connect the events detailed in it to those of 2 Kings 3, which describes Mesha’s war against the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom.
- This 3-foot-tall basalt stone holds 34 lines of Phoenician script, or paleo-Hebrew, recording the victories of the Moabite King Mesha.
- King Mesha set up the victory stela in his capital, Dibon (modern Dhiban in Jordan).
- **[SLIDE]** Translation
 - I am Mesha, the son of Kemoš-yatti, the king of Moab, from Dibon... I made this high place for Kemoš [...] because he has delivered me from all kings, and because he has made me look down on all my enemies.
 - Omri was the king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab for many days, for Kemoš was angry with his land.
 - And his son succeeded him, and he also said "I will oppress Moab!" In my days he did so, but I looked down on him and on his house, and Israel has gone to ruin, yes, it has gone to ruin for ever!
 - Omri had taken possession of the whole land of Medeba and he lived there in his days and half the days of his son, forty years, but Kemoš restored it in my days....
 - And the men of Gad lived in the land of Ataroth from ancient times, and the king of Israel built Ataroth for himself, and I fought against the city, and I captured, and I killed all the people from the city as a sacrifice for Kemoš and for Moab...

- And Kemoš said to me: "Go, take Nebo from Israel!" And I went in the night, and I fought against it from the break of dawn until noon, and I took it, and I killed its whole population, seven thousand male citizens and aliens, female citizens and aliens, and servant girls; for I had put it to the ban of Aštar Kemoš. And from there, I took the vessels of YHWH, and I hauled them before the face of Kemoš.
- [Then he includes a list of other cities he defeated...]
- And Horonaim, the House of David lived in it. And Kemoš said to me: "Go down, fight against Horonaim!" I went down [...] and Kemoš restored it in my days...
- There are some remarkable elements to this stele:
 - First, it confirms the family of Omri as the kings of Israel, including his son Ahab. Line 6 clearly implies that Mesha was already king of Moab at the death of Ahab (c. 853 B.C.E.).
 - Second, it confirms the story of Mesha's rebellion.
 - Third, it includes the earliest absolute reference to the tetragrammation, the sacred name of God, in the Paleo-Hebrew script.
- Fourth, at the bottom of the stele, a second part of the text talks about the victories of Mesha in the South, with the conquest of the city of Bronen against the "house of David", that is, the kingdom of Judah.
 - This reference was only confirmed by archaeologists in 2022, and I'll put a link to their paper on the website if you're interested.

Elisha the Softy

- Elisha exhibits a side of the prophetic that we don't often think about: The role of comfort and support for the people.
- He helped the wife of a dead prophet who was in debt.
- The woman from Shunem is given a child
- The Shunamite woman's son is resurrected
- The prophets and the poisoned stew
- The 20 loaves of barley feed 100 men
- The recovered axe head (6:1-7)

Na'aman (chapter 5)

- [SLIDE] Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram
 - Aram was an empire centered around what is now modern day Syria, with its capital in Damascus. Aramean → Aramaic language
 - Their king at this point was named Ben-Hadad (ben means "son" and Hadad is the name of their god)
- "leprosy"
 - tzara'at - a skin disease that has a spiritual source
 - In Numbers 12:1-15 we are shown that it has a connection to lashon hara
- (note the tearing of clothes again)
- Wash 7 times in the Jordan

- this is a small thing
- Faith = faithfulness / obedience
- Not only was Na'aman healed, he became a follower of the God of Israel.
 - 2 Kings 5:17–18 — Then Naaman said, “If not, please let your servant be given two mules’ load of earth; for your servant will no longer offer a burnt offering nor a sacrifice to other gods, but to the LORD. 18 Regarding this matter may the LORD forgive your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow down in the house of Rimmon, when I bow down in the house of Rimmon, may the LORD please forgive your servant in this matter.”
- Why dirt?
 - because of the connection between the Land of Israel and the God of Israel
 - Na'aman wanted to be able to worship the God of Israel, but because he was a servant of the King of Aram he could not live there.
 - So he did the next best thing and took some dirt home with him.
- But Gehazi got greedy.
 - and his greed led to him and his entire family being struck with tzara'at.
 - Remember, it is a spiritual affliction

Elisha the Prophetic Spy

- Elisha kept on telling Jehoram the King of Israel where the Arameans were going to be camped.
- He got so good at it that the king of Aram, Ben-Hadad, thought he had a spy in his midst. When he found out it was the prophet giving away their position, he sent an army to Dothan with the goal of capturing Elisha.
- Elisha apparently had a new servant by this point.
- 2 Kings 6:15-16 — And his servant said to him, “This is hopeless, my master! What are we to do?” And he said, “Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are greater than those who are with them.”
- God opened the servant’s eyes to see an army of God, horses and chariots of fire, surrounding the city.
- God struck the army of Aram with blindness, then he deceived the army and brought them to Samaria, ostensibly to find the prophet they were looking for.
- Then he handed the army over to Jehoram. Instead of killing them, Elisha instructed the king to feed them and send them on their way.
- 2 Kings 6:23 — And the marauding bands of Arameans did not come again into the land of Israel.

Siege of Samaria

- But only for a little while, apparently
- **[Tell the story - 2 Kings 6:24-7:20]**
 - Cannibalism
 - Jehoram is angry with God and Elisha

- Elisha promises that tomorrow there will be cheap food for everyone. One of Jehoram's men didn't believe Elisha, was told he would see it but not partake.
- Four men with tzara'at were in the outside portion of the gate
- Went to the Aramean camp in search of food or death
- Found the camp abandoned
- Ran back and told the king
- The king sent some men out and found that the Arameans had run away, dropping things as they went
- 2 Kings 7:6 — For the Lord had made the army of the Arameans hear a sound of chariots, a sound of horses, that is, the sound of a great army; and they said to one another, "Behold, the king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians against us, to attack us!"
- That guy who didn't believe was trampled by the crowd like it was Black Friday.

Jehoram the Righteous King

- Jehoram was apparently trying to be righteous.
- He wore sackcloth under his royal clothes, in a private practice of mourning
- He was sickened by the idea of Israelite women eating their babies.
- He was zealous for the protection of his people, to the point of even seeking justice from the man of God.
- Seven years later, we see that the Shunamite woman, who had fled during a drought at the instruction of Elisha, asked the king to restore her land to her. And he did.

Hazael

- Let's talk about another important character who shows up in our section today.
- **[SLIDE]** Hazael, the king of Aram from 842-805 BCE
- Elijah was originally told to anoint Hazael king of Aram, but he passed the job to Elisha, apparently because the time was not right.
 - 1 Kings 19:15–17 — The LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram. You shall also anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. And it shall come about that the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall put to death.
- 2 Kings 8:7–15 tells how Hazael became king
 - "But on the following day, he took the cover and dipped it in water, and spread it over his face, so that he died. And Hazael became king in his place."
 - **[SLIDE]** This is also attested to in a basalt statue of Shalmaneser III
 - Below the waist of the statue, inscribed on his attire, are Assyrian cuneiform memorializing Shalmaneser III's military conquests and building construction.
 - The statue says:

- Hadad-ezer passed away. Hazael, son of a nobody (Assyrian: mār lā mammāna), took the throne. He mustered his numerous troops; [and] he moved against me to do war and battle. [I] fought with him. I decisively defeated him. I took away from him his walled camp. In order to save his life he ran away. I pursued [him] as far as Damascus, his royal city. [I] cut down his orchards.
- Hazael will come up more in next week’s reading, as we hear about how he expanded the Aramean empire, attacking Israel, the Philistines, and even Jerusalem.
- There are some other interesting references to him in the archaeological record:
 - [SLIDE] A small ivory plaque with an Aramaic inscription found in 1928 in a city called Arslan-Tash.
 - “This... son of Amma, engraved for our lord Hazael in the year...”
 - [SLIDE] A bronze plaque that would have covered a horse’s nose, discovered in 1984
 - Four goddesses in the style of northern Syria
 - Inscription surrounding it says, “This is what Hadad gave our lord Hazael in the valley of Bashan.”
 - [SLIDE] Zakkur Stela
 - a royal stele of King Zakkur of Hamath and Luash in Syria, who ruled around 785 BCE.
 - I am Zakkur, king of Hamath and Luash ... Bar-Hadad, son of Hazael, king of Aram, united against me seventeen kings ... all these kings laid siege to Hazrach ... Baalshamayn (the god of the city) said to me, “Do not be afraid! ... I will save you from all [these kings who] have besieged you”
- Elisha’s prophecy about Hazael
 - 2 Kings 8:12 — “Because I know the evil that you will do to the sons of Israel: you will set their fortified cities on fire, you will kill their young men with the sword, their little ones you will smash to pieces, and you will rip up their pregnant women.”

Joram of Judah

- Jehoshaphat the king of Judah died, and his son Joram [Jehoram] served as king for 8 years
- He was evil: 2 Chronicles 21:6 — “He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for Ahab’s daughter was his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD”
- 2 Chronicles 21:4 — “he killed all his brothers with the sword, and some of the leaders of Israel as well”
- During this time, Judah lost it’s power in the region, and Edom revolted like Moab had done to Israel, setting up its own king
- Then the Arabs and the Philistines attacked Judah, and killed all of Joram’s sons except his youngest, who went by Jehoahaz or Ahaziah.
- 2 Chronicles 21:18–19 — So after all this the LORD struck him in his intestines with an incurable sickness. Now it came about in the course of time, at the end of two years, that his bowels came out because of his sickness, and he died in great pain.
- 2 Chronicles 21:20 — and he departed with no one’s regret, and they buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings

- Ahaziah, Joram's youngest son (not the same as the other Jehoram's brother), became king. But he was also evil.

Jehu's Plot

- Ahaziah joined forces with Jehoram the king of Israel to fight Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead
- The Arameans wounded Jehoram, so he and Ahaziah retreated to Jezreel so he could heal
- Elisha told a young prophet-in-training go to Ramoth-gilead and find a commander in the army named Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi.
- The prophet was instructed to anoint Jehu as the King of Israel, then leave as quickly as possible.
- This anointing is another of the prophetic tasks handed down to Elisha by Elijah
 - The pieces are starting to fall into place.
 - 1 Kings 19:16–17 — You shall also anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi king over Israel... And it shall come about that the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall put to death.
- So the prophet does what he is told, then flees.
- The commanders around him immediately sided with him and proclaimed him king.
- But he had a problem: Jehoram was still alive and recovering in Jezreel.
- **[SLIDE]** So he takes his chariot and heads West.
- Apparently he has a unique chariot-driving style, “the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously” (2 Kings 9:20)
- After sending out a few messengers to see who was coming and what their intentions were, Jehoram and Ahaziah left the city themselves to meet Jehu, probably expecting news of the battle.
- They found him on the property of Naboth the Jezreelite.
 - Remember that story? 1 Kings 21 tells us that Jezebel had Naboth killed by the leaders of Jezreel so that Ahab, the father of Jehoash, could use his vineyard as a vegetable garden.
- 2 Kings 9:22 — When Joram saw Jehu, he said, “Is your intention peace, Jehu?” And he answered, “What ‘peace,’ so long as your mother Jezebel’s acts of prostitution and witchcraft are so many?”
- Jehoram turns to flee and tells Ahaziah to do the same
- Jehu shot an arrow in Jehoram’s back, through his heart, and had his officer Bidkar throw Jehoram’s body into the field of Naboth.
 - Jehu remembered the prophecy that Elijah pronounced on Ahab:
 - 1 Kings 21:24 — The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat; and the one who dies in the field, the birds of the sky will eat.”
- Then Jehu chased down Ahaziah, king of Judah, and shot him at Ibleam, but he died at Megiddo
- 2 Chronicles 22:9 says “they caught him while he was hiding in Samaria; they brought him to Jehu [I assume at Megiddo], put him to death, and buried him.”

Tel Dan Stele

- [SLIDE] Now we get to look at one of the most important archaeological discoveries ever found, the Tel Dan Inscription.
- Who was Jehoram and Ahaziah fighting in Ramoth-gilead? Hazael, king of Aram
- Remember, Jehoram and Ahaziah left the battle so that Jehoram would be able to recover from his injury. Then one of the major commanders of the army left to stage a coup. From Hazael's perspective, that whole thing looked like a victory.
- But Hazael tells the story of this victory a different way. He wrote an inscription and placed it in the city of Dan, the northernmost city in Israel.
- It is a triumphal inscription, written in Aramaic, that corroborates the events that occur in 2 Kings 9.
- The text reads:
 - And I killed two [power]ful kin[gs], who harnessed two thou[sand cha]riots and two thousand horsemen. [I killed Jeho]ram son of [Ahab] king of Israel, and I killed [Ahaz]yahu son of [Joram kin]g of the house of David.
- [SLIDE] This is the earliest, most broadly accepted non-Biblical reference we have to David.
- Before the Tel Dan Stele was found in 1993, just 30 years ago, most of the academic world was convinced that David never even existed. The only references to him here in the Bible, and it seemed like the stories were more "King Arthur" than "George Washington."
- The text here is undeniable, and even the most ardent anti-David experts have had to conclude that it is authentic.
- As Rabbi Jachte says, "The discovery of the Tel Dan Stele had significance beyond proving the historicity of David HaMelech. It demonstrates the fallacy of drawing conclusions from the absence of archaeological evidence."
- The Mesha Stele we discussed before is an earlier reference, but because the text in that location is being reconstructed in part with a papier-mâché cast that was taken before the stele was broken, the translation is more controversial.
- So, from Hazael's perspective, these two kings died because of his campaign, and he was able to use that victory as propaganda even in one of the towns of Israel.

Jehu

- Let's go back to Jehu. After taking care of Ahaziah in Megiddo, Jehu went back to Jezreel to deal with the evil queen mother Jezebel.
- Jezebel was Jehoram's mother, the wife of Ahab.
- Why does Jezebel call Jehu "Zimri"?
 - 1 Kings 16.8–10 tells us that story
 - Zimri was a commander in the army of Elah, the king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
 - Zimri conspired against Elah, killed him and his family, and claimed the kingdom.
 - However, he only reigned for 7 days. The army people were in the middle of a battle against the Philistines, and they crowned Omri, Ahab's father, Jezebel's father in law, king instead.

- Jezebel was thrown down from the tower and died, and the dogs ate her.
- Next, Jehu needed to consolidate his reign. Ahab had seventy descendants in Samaria, and any one of them could attempt to overthrow the new king.
- So he wrote a letter to the leaders in the city of Samaria and threw down the gauntlet.
- They were unwilling to fight him, so they surrendered and said they'd do anything he wanted.
- He had them kill all 70 of Ahab's descendants, decapitate them, and send the heads to Jezreel, which they did.
- 2 Kings 10:11 — Then Jehu" killed all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, his acquaintances, and his priests, until he left him without a survivor."
- So, earlier we learned that Ahaziah king of Judah was killed by Jehu, the new king of Israel.
 - 2 Kings 10:13-14 — Jehu encountered the relatives of Ahaziah king of Judah... Then he said, "Take them alive." So they took them alive, and slaughtered them at the pit of Beth-eked, forty-two men; and he left none of them.
 - 2 Chronicles 22:8-9 also says, "[Jehu] found the princes of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers attending to Ahaziah, and killed them... So there was no one of the house of Ahaziah to retain the power of the kingdom."
 - In Jerusalem, Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, heard about her son's death and decided to consolidate the rule of the Kingdom of Judah for herself, so she killed anyone else who might have a claim to the throne. Or so she thought.
 - Ahaziah's sister stole her infant brother Joash away and hid him, with the help of her husband Jehoiada the priest. We'll continue the story of Joash, one of Judah's greatest kings, next week.
- We also see a story here about a man named Jehonadab the son of Rechab
 - His descendants show up in Jeremiah 35 and are used as an example of people who follow the instructions of their forefathers.

Jehu's Reign

- Once he had consolidated his power, he also decided to get rid of the Baal worshippers.
- He convinced them that he was a Baal worshipper, "Ahab served Baal a little; Jehu will serve him much"
- Deceived them, got them all in one place, gave them special clothes so they would be clearly distinguished, then had 80 of his men kill them all, burn down the temple they were worshipping in, and turn it into a latrine.
- However, despite this reform, he did not completely reform the worship of God in Israel.
 - 2 Kings 10:29 — However, as for the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, into which he misled Israel, from these Jehu did not desist, including the golden calves that were at Bethel and at Dan.
- Jehu reigned over the Northern Kingdom of Israel for 28 years.
- 2 Kings 10:32 — In those days the LORD began to cut off pieces from Israel
- **[SLIDE]** This is where we get to the last archaeological discovery of our lesson tonight, the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III.

- This victory pillar commemorates the deeds of Assyrian king Shalmaneser III, who reigned 858–824 BCE.
- **[SLIDE]** It includes a panel on one side that depicts King Jehu bringing tribute to Shalmaneser III, and bowing down before him. The text above the scene says:
- “I received the tribute of Jehu son of Omri: silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden vase with pointed bottom, golden tumblers, golden buckets, tin, a staff for a king [and] spears.”
- Jehu was not from the line of Omri, but given the power of Omri’s line, it’s not surprising that the Assyrians would set him in that line. From their perspective, it’s really about which dynasty the land belongs to.
- While we don’t have any version of this story in the Bible, the archaeology once again supports the Biblical characters.