

The Kingdom of Israel

The Israelites Choose a King

Around 1000 B.C., the strongest people living in Canaan were not the Israelites, but the **Philistines** (FIH • luh • STEENS). The Philistines had strong cities, and they knew how to make _____ tools and weapons.

According to the Hebrew Bible, some Israelites began copying the Philistine religion. It suggests the Israelites began to think they needed a king of their own to prevent this problem. They probably believed a king would unite the tribes and help them _____ off the Philistines.

The Rule of King Saul

In 1020 B.C. the Israelites asked Samuel to choose a king. Samuel was a judge and a _____ (PRAH•fuht). A prophet is a person who the ancient Israelites thought was **instructed** by God. Samuel warned that a king would tax the Israelites and make them slaves. The Israelites still demanded a king, so they chose a warrior-farmer named _____ (SAWL).

Samuel anointed Saul as king. In other words, he blessed him with oil to show that God had chosen him. Saul was tall and handsome and had won many battles.

Saul defeated the Israelites' enemies in battle after battle. However, according to the Hebrew Bible, the king displeased God by disobeying some of his commands. God then chose another king and instructed Samuel to anoint him in secret. The new king was a young shepherd named _____.

(According to the Hebrew Bible, David had to be called in from the fields where he was tending his sheep when Samuel arrived to anoint him.)

David and Solomon

--- King David built an Israelite empire and made Jerusalem his capital city. ---

Even before he became king of Israel, David was known for his _____ and leadership. The Hebrew Bible describes how he became famous by telling the story of David and Goliath. Before a battle against the Philistines, a giant Philistine named Goliath dared any Israelite to fight him one-on-one. David stepped forward with his shepherd's staff, a slingshot, and five smooth stones.

Goliath roared and rushed forward with a heavy spear. David hurled one _____ straight at the giant's forehead, and Goliath dropped dead on the spot.

Saul put David in charge of the army. As his victories grew, Israelite women sang his praises. "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." Saul grew envious and plotted to kill David.

David hid out in enemy territory until Saul and his three sons were killed in battle. The bitter rivalry was over. David was able to take the throne in about _____ B.C.

Once in power, according to the Hebrew Bible, David drove the Philistines from the area. He conquered other neighboring nations and created an _____ (EHM • PYR). An empire is a nation that rules several other nations. Conquered peoples had to pay David **tribute** (TRIH • byoot). Tribute is money or slaves given to a stronger ruler.

David made the Israelites pay heavy taxes. He needed money to expand Israel's capital, **Jerusalem** (juh•ROO•suh•luhm). He wanted a fine temple there so that sacred religious objects cherished by the Israelites would finally have a permanent home. David died before he built the temple, but the Israelites remembered him as their greatest king, as do _____ today.

The Rule of King Solomon

When David died, his son **Solomon** (SAHL•uh•muhn) became king. It was Solomon who built a splendid stone temple in Jerusalem. It became the **symbol** and center of the Jewish religion. In the Hebrew Bible, Solomon was known for his wise sayings, or _____ (PRAH• VUHRBS), but many Israelites hated his rule. Solomon taxed the people to pay for his great buildings.

The Israelites in the north were especially unhappy with Solomon. To get more money, Solomon had made many of their young men work in the mines of a neighboring country.

When Solomon died, the northerners rebelled and fighting broke out. Ten of the 12 tribes set up their own nation in the north. It was called the kingdom of Israel, and its capital was Samaria. In the south, the other two tribes founded the smaller kingdom of _____ (JOO• duh). Its capital was Jerusalem, and its people were called Jews.

A Troubled Time

--- The Israelites were conquered and forced to leave Israel and Judah. ---

While the Israelites were dividing their kingdom, the Assyrians and Chaldeans (kal • DEE • uhns) were building empires in southwest Asia. These peoples wanted to control the trade routes that ran through the Israelite kingdoms. Small and weak, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah felt threatened by their _____ neighbors.

Who Were the Prophets?

During this troubled time, people who became known as prophets brought hope to the kingdom of Israel. The prophets emphasized religious ideals of leading a moral life and helping others so as to connect with God. Their special message was that being faithful meant more than going to a temple to worship. It meant working for a just society. The prophet _____ said that justice should "roll down like waters and righteousness as a mighty stream." The Jewish goal of a just society also became an important part of Christianity and Islam.

What Caused the Fall of Israel?

The warlike Assyrians were _____ everywhere in the region. When they conquered a nation, the Assyrians destroyed its main buildings and scattered the population. Assyrians then settled in the territory.

In 722 B.C. the Assyrians conquered Israel and scattered the _____ tribes across their empire. Over time, the Israelites who were forced to move lost contact with those who remained in Israel and Judah. Historians do not yet know what happened to these tribes. They are often called the “lost tribes of Israel.”

The Assyrians brought people from elsewhere in their empire to live in Samaria. These settlers mixed with the surviving Israelites who had not been killed or forced to move. A new culture developed and the people became known as _____.

The Samaritans adopted many Israelite beliefs. They worshiped the God of Israel, read the Torah, and followed the Israelites’ religious laws. Over time their religious practices developed separately, and they had little contact. Today’s Judaism developed from the religious practices of the tribes of _____.

Why Did Judah Fall?

Now, only the small kingdom of Judah was left of the once proud empire of David. It did not last long, because the Egyptians conquered it about _____ B.C. The Jews were able to keep their king but paid tribute to Egypt.

However, Egyptian rule was cut short when the Chaldeans conquered Egypt in 605 B.C. The Chaldeans became the new rulers of Judah. At first, the Chaldeans treated the Israelites like the Egyptians had before. They allowed the Jews to keep their king as long as they paid tribute.

Several years later, the Jews united with the Egyptians to rebel against the Chaldeans. Judah held out against the Chaldean invasion until _____ B.C. That year, King **Nebuchadnezzar** (NEH•byuh•kuhd•NEH•zuhr) of the Chaldeans captured Jerusalem. He punished the Jews severely. He made 10,000 Jews leave the city and live in Babylon, the Chaldean capital. Then he appointed a new Jewish king.

Soon the new king of Judah was planning a revolt against the _____. A prophet named Jeremiah warned the king that another revolt was dangerous, but the king did not listen. In 586 B.C. he revolted. This time, the Chaldean ruler crushed Jerusalem. He destroyed the temple, captured the king, and took him and thousands of Jews to Babylon. In Jewish history, this time became known as the Babylonian Captivity.

Summary

- Saul was the first king of the Israelites. He united the 12 tribes into one kingdom.
- King David built an Israelite empire and made Jerusalem his capital. Solomon built a great temple at Jerusalem, but after he died, the Israelites split into two kingdoms—Israel and Judah.
- The Assyrians and then the Chaldeans conquered Israel and Judah, and forced many Israelites to leave their _____.