

# Yet more Kings

Notes for 15 Nov

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Read: [1 Kings 16](#)

This week's chapter is a bit of a 'nothing'. More kings did bad things, and those bad things are catalogued in the oft-referenced "The Book of the History of the Kings of Israel" (vv 5, 14, 20 and 27) which, sadly, has never been found.

It is a placeholder that covers the events in the minimum of detail and sets us up for the epic Ahab vs Elijah confrontation that follows.

As described in last week's study by Jim, the kingdom of Israel is more unstable than its southern neighbour. We have [Baasha](#), [Elah](#), [Zimri](#), [Omri](#) and finally [Ahab](#).



1: A snippet of the Leningrad Codex, from c1008CE, containing part of the Book of Kings

## 1. Baasha's Judgment (vv. 1–7)

- God's word through the prophet [Jehu](#) (note that this Jehu is a different character from the king Jehu who follows in 2 Kings) condemns Baasha for continuing Jeroboam's sins.
- Despite being chosen by God, Baasha repeats Jeroboam's idolatry and suffers the same fate: his dynasty will be wiped out.

## 2. Reign of Elah and Zimri's Coup (vv. 8–14)

- Elah (Baasha's son) reigns only two years.
- Zimri, a commander, assassinates him during a drunken episode and fulfils Jehu's prophecy by killing Baasha's entire household.

## 3. Zimri's Seven-Day Reign (vv. 15–20)

- The army rejects Zimri and declares Omri king. Facing defeat, Zimri burns the palace down around himself.

## 4. Omri's Reign and the Division of the People (vv. 21–28)

- Israel splits between Omri and Tibni before Omri prevails.
- Omri builds Samaria — a politically strategic capital that will remain Israel's seat of power.

- However, his reign is no improvement on his predecessors: he "did worse than all who were before him."

#### 5. Ahab's Reign and the Height of Apostasy (vv. 29–34)

- Ahab marries [Jezebel](#), a Sidonian (ie [Phoenician](#)) princess, and establishes Baal worship in Israel.
- He builds a temple for Baal in Samaria.
- The chapter ends with the curse of Hiel of Bethel, who rebuilds Jericho at the cost of his sons.

## Discussion

- Read vv 1-4. We've sort-of taken for granted that the tales told in Samuel and Kings reflect God speaking directly, or directly through a prophet, to a king or ruler.
  - Does that happen today?
  - If not, why not?
  - If yes, then give an example
- How does God interact with rulers today?
  - Is it different from back then? Why? In what way?
  - Were Israel and Judah 'special' in God's eyes? Is that 'fair'?
  - What do you think (gut reaction please!) when you hear a modern ruler claim that they were acting on instructions from God?
- What do you think were God's interactions with, say, the [kingdoms of China](#) at the same time?
  - I realise that this is complete conjecture, but! It might force us to acknowledge some unacknowledged assumptions
  - What would you consider to be a *fair* and *reasonable* way for God to deal with peoples far removed from Israel/Judah?

This is the end of a section of Kings, and we begin a new section next week with Ahab, Jezebel and Elijah.