

Bad Kings

Jeroboam (Israel)

1 Kings 11:26-12:20, 12:25-13:10, 13:33-14:19

Built the high places in Dan and Bethel that caused Israel to sin from then on.

Appointed priests from any tribe, not just Levi.

When Jeroboam established his altars in Bethel, a prophet came to tell Jeroboam that decades later, Josiah would tear the altars down. When Jeroboam cried to have the prophet seized, the king's arm withered! The altar broke, and the ashes poured out of it. The king asked the prophet to have God heal his arm. It was healed, but Jeroboam learned nothing from this and rebuilt the altar at Bethel.

When Jeroboam's child became ill, the king told his wife to disguise herself and ask the prophet Abijah if it would live. Abijah immediately knew who she was, and delivered God's judgment on Jeroboam to her.

1 Kings 14:16

God will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he sinned and which he caused all Israel to commit.

Omri (Israel)

1 Kings 16:16-28

Made king by popular rebellion.

Built Samaria to be the capital of Israel.

Established idolatry in Israel.

1 Kings 16:26

For Omri walked in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and in the sins that he caused Israel to commit, provoking the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger by their idols.

Ahab (Israel)

1 Kings 16:29-34, 18:17-19:2, 20-22:40,
2 Chronicles 18

Promoted worship of Baal with his wife, Jezebel.

Caused a three-year drought in Israel.

Allowed his wife to kill Naboth for a vineyard.

Persecuted Elijah, God's prophet.

Refused to listen to God's prophets.

Sacrificed his children to idols.

1 Kings 21:25

There was no one like Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the Lord, urged on by his wife Jezebel.



Rehoboam (Judah)

1 Kings 12:1-24, 14:21-31, 2 Chronicles 10-12

Ignored the council of wise men.

Treated the people harshly, causing the division of Israel from Judah.

Adopted pagan worship.

Judah was plundered by Egypt because they abandoned God.



2 Chronicles 12:14
Rehoboam did evil,
for he did not set
his heart to seek the
Lord.

Athaliah (Judah)

2 Kings 11:1-16, 2 Chronicles 22:10-15

Destroyed her whole family to have control.

The Levites and the commander of the guard conspired to make her surviving grandson, Joash, King.

Jehoshabeath, daughter of Jehoram and wife of Jehoida, hid Joash from Athaliah in the temple.



2 Chronicles 22:10
Now when Athaliah,
Ahaziah's mother, saw that
her son was dead, she set
about to destroy all the royal
family of the house of Judah.

Ahaz (Judah)

2 Kings 16, 2 Chronicles 28

Sacrificed his son to Molech.

Replaced God's altar with one like Assyria's.

His army was defeated and his people subjected to other nations because of his evil.

Plundered the temple dishes to bribe Assyria.

Worshipped idols of the nations around him.
building high places in every city.



2 Chronicles 28:19

For the Lord brought Judah low because of King Ahaz of Israel, for he had behaved without restraint in Judah and had been faithless to the Lord.

Manasseh (Judah)

2 Kings 21:1-18, 2 Chronicles 33:1-20

Rebuilt the altars to Baal and other idols.

Put idols' altars in the temple.

Sacrificed his son.

Practiced sorcery.

Killed innocent people.

Was taken away in shackles to Babylon.

2 Chronicles 33:9

Manasseh misled Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that they did more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the people of Israel.



Israel and Judah Were Destroyed for their Sins

2 Kings 17:7-17

All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshiped other gods and followed the practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced.

The Israelites secretly did things against the Lord their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city they built themselves high places in all their towns. They set up sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. At every high place they burned incense, as the nations whom the Lord had driven out before them had done.

They did wicked things that provoked the Lord to anger. They worshiped idols, though the Lord had said, "You shall not do this." The Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: "Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets."

But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their fathers, who did not trust in the Lord their God. They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their fathers and the warnings he had given them. They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless. They imitated the nations around them although the Lord had ordered them, "Do not do as they do," and they did the things the Lord had forbidden them to do.

They forsook all the commands of the Lord their God and made for themselves two idols cast in the shape of calves, and an Asherah pole. They bowed down to all the starry hosts, and they worshiped Baal. They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They practiced divination and sorcery and sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger. ■

Hoshea (Israel)

2 Kings 17:1-6

Was a traitor to his master, king of Assyria.

Israel was completely defeated and its people taken to other lands because of its sins.

2 Kings 17:2

Hoshea did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, yet not like the kings of Israel who were before him.



Zedekiah (Judah)

2 Kings 24:18-25:7, 2 Chronicles 11-16

Followed the idolatry and disobedience of his ancestors.

Mocked and disregarded God's prophets.

Was taken to Babylon and blinded.

Judah suffered a great siege and famine, and the temple was destroyed. Judah was destroyed for its sins.

2 Kings 24: 20

Indeed, Jerusalem and Judah so angered the Lord that he expelled them from his presence.

Bad Kings Can Repent

Jehoahaz

2 Kings 13:1-9

When God punished Jehoahaz by making him lose to his enemy several times, Jehoahaz begged the Lord to help them. Since the people were suffering greatly, God provided a mighty soldier to give them victory.

Manasseh

2 Chronicles 33:10

When Manasseh was held captive in Babylon, he humbled himself and admitted his sin before God. God accepted him and let him return to Jerusalem. There Manasseh removed the idols, fixed the temple, and obeyed God. But the people were still influenced by the disobedience of his early reign.

Ahab

2 Kings 21:27-29

When Ahab heard God's pronouncement of the punishment that would come upon Ahab and his family, the king tore his clothes, put on the mourning robe of sackcloth, and fasted in sorrow. Because he humbled himself before God, God spared Ahab from seeing the judgment come to pass.



Jehoiakim Zechariah Elah
 Abijah Joram Baasha
 Amnon Jehoash Jehoram
 Jehoahaz Pekahiah Shallum
More Evil Kings of Israel and Judah
 Pekah Jeroboam II Menahem
AHAZIAH Zimri Adad

What Makes a King Bad?

Give examples of the following characteristics of some evil kings:

Selfishness _____

Idolatry _____

Ruthlessness _____

Violence _____

Pride _____

What influence did these kings have?

Israel and Judah were destroyed and taken captive because they followed their kings into idolatry, false worship, and harsh treatment of each other.