

The Omride and Jehu Dynasties of Israel

in addition to Hebrew Bible, some information about Israel & Judah found in various ANE sources:

- Mesha Inscription—subjugation of Moab by Omri, revolt of Mesha, king of Moab, against Jehoram
- Tel Dan Inscription—possible references to Jehoram (Israel) & Ahaziah (Judah)
- Siloam Inscription—celebrates completion of water channel bringing water from spring of Gihon to Pool of Siloam inside the walls of Jerusalem, during reign of Hezekiah
- Monolith Inscription of Shalmaneser III—mentions Battle of Qarqar in 853, presence of Ahab king of Israel
- Inscriptions of Adad-nirari III—record tribute payments from “the land of Omri” and “Joash of the land of Samaria”
- Inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III—mention Menahem of Samaria, report that he put Hoshea on the throne of Samaria after the people overthrew Pekah, and also mention Ahaz, the first mention of a contemporary king of Judah
- Inscriptions of Sargon II—report conquest of Samaria and resettlement of exiles there
- Sennacherib Prisms—three clay prisms that record accounts of invasion of Palestine, siege of Jerusalem, and tribute of Hezekiah, king of Judah
- Inscriptions of Esarhaddon—record tribute from Judah, Edom, and Moab
- Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal—record tribute from Judah, Edom, and Moab
- Assyrian *limmu* lists—10th - 7th C B.C.E.
- Babylonian Chronicles—several different tablets containing information on history of Babylonia and their interactions with surrounding nations, including Judah

Omride Dynasty

according to 1 Kgs 16:24, after becoming king and defeating his rival Tibni, Omri bought a hill and built his capital of Samaria on it—archaeological excavations at Megiddo, Hazor, Jezreel, and Gezer show expansion of building programs under Omri & his successors in early 9th C, implying wealth flowing into the kingdom—Omri & Ahab first contemporary kings of either Israel or Judah mentioned in writings of Assyria, Babylonia, or neighboring kingdoms

Omri came to power at about the same time as Ashurnasirpal II, the first king of the Neo-Assyrian empire, who began extensive building programs at home, including his new capital of Calah, and undertook military campaigns abroad, including into Syria-Palestine—his son Shalmaneser III had some success in N Syria, as well as Anatolia and Urartu, but was unable to take Damascus—although he expanded the Assyrian Empire to its greatest extent in 250 years, he was unable to maintain it, and his reign ended in rebellion—after that, Assyria was involved with internal issues and conflicts with Babylonia and Urartu for the next 80 years

in addition to fortifying strategic Israelite cities and presiding over an influx of wealth, primarily by controlling access to major trade routes through Palestine and the Transjordan—Omri conquered Moab and forced it to pay tribute—after his death, Omri was succeeded by Ahab, who expanded the royal palace in Samaria (the ivory house, 1 Kgs 22:39) and built another palace in Jezreel—continued the subjugation of Moab, and led a coalition of armies against Shalmaneser III of Assyria—apparently died of wounds received in battle against Aram or Assyria

end of Omride dynasty difficult to determine, but apparently a sharp decline in fortune during the reigns of Ahaziah and Jehoram—nearly contemporaneous kings also named Ahaziah and Jehoram in Judah, mention of intermarriage of royal families of Israel & Judah in 1-2 Kgs, and textual difficulties (MT, LXX, and LXX^L have somewhat different chronologies, sequences, and association of kings with specific events) all suggest confusion of Dtr concerning this period—at any rate, great successes of Omri & Ahab come to a rapid end after Ahab's death—Moab successfully throws off Israelite hegemony, and anti-Assyrian Omride dynasty overthrown by pro-Assyrian Jehu dynasty

Jehu Dynasty

2 Kgs 9 says that Jehu, a general in Jehoram's army, overthrew Jehoram of Israel and killed Ahaziah of Judah as well, thus creating vacancies on both thrones—however, the Tel Dan Inscription says that King Hazael of Damascus killed them—perhaps there was some sort of alliance between Jehu and Hazael, or perhaps Jehu took advantage of the vacancy on the throne to take charge—Athaliah, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel and wife of Ahaziah, reigned over Judah, while Jehu became king over Israel—three of Jehu's first acts are the slaughter of Ahab's descendants, slaughter of the priests of Baal, and payment of tribute to the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser)—recent surge in Assyrian strength probably led in part to Jehu's pro-Assyrian policy, and Israel became a vassal of Assyria

after Ahab's death, Hazael began to conquer territory along the coast of Palestine, including Galilee, the Jezreel Valley, and as far south as Gath, even threatening Jerusalem—he also conquered Israelite territory in the Transjordan—Hazael and his son Ben-hadad II took over lead of anti-Assyrian coalition that had been led by Ahab—near end of reign of Jehoahaz or beginning of reign of Jehoash, Israel began to reassert itself with respect to Damascus under Ben-hadad, recovering some territory

despite its early weakness, Jehu dynasty was the longest lasting dynasty in Israel,

surviving for almost 100 years—period of major decline in power by Assyria led to greater prosperity in Israel, particularly during the reign of Jehu's grandson Jeroboam II, who reigned 41 years—Jeroboam took advantage of the period of Assyrian decline and expanded Israel's borders to both N and S—according to the prophets, wealth concentrated in the hands of a few—period of relative peace and prosperity came to an end with the ascension of Tiglath-pileser III to the throne of Assyria