

Horin), diplomatic and Zionist history (N. W. Cohen, E. Lifschutz, L. P. Gartner, M. Rosenstock, S. Halperin), historic group relations (R. Glanz, J. Higham). There was a rich store of American Jewish autobiographies, but few worthwhile biographies appeared. The partial professionalization of the field, its entry into the general currents of Jewish and American historiography, the development of substantial archives, and Jewish communal interest, were favorable signs for future scholarship.

Methodological discussion and bibliographic surveys include M. Davis and I. S. Meyer, eds., *The Writing of American Jewish History* (1957); S. W. Baron, "American Jewish History: Problems and Methods" *PAJHS*, XXXIX (1950), 207-266; M. Rischin, *An Inventory of American Jewish History* (1954); L. P. Gartner, "The History of North American Jewish Communities . . .," *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, VII (1965), 22-29; E. Lifschutz, *Bibliography of American and Canadian Jewish Memoirs and Autobiographies* (1970); O. Handlin ed., *Report of a Conference on the Jewish Experience in America* (1948; mimeo.); A. G. Duker, "An Evaluation of Achievement in American Jewish Local Historical Writing," *PAJHS*, XLIX (1960), 215-53; I. S. Meyer, "American Jewish Biography: An Introductory List," *Jewish Book Annual*, VIII (1949-50), 77-96; John J. Appel, "Hausen's Third-Generation 'Law' and the Origins of the American Jewish Historical Society," *JSOS*, XXIII (1961), 3-20. [L.P.G.]

**Bibliography:** M. Steinschneider, *Geschichtsliteratur der Juden* . . . vol. 1: *Bibliographie der hebraischen Schriften* (1905); S. W. Baron, *History and Jewish Historians* (1964); A. Marx, in: *AJHSP*, 20 (1911), 1-9; Shunami, Bibl. index s.v. *History*; for a partial list of monographs on Jewish history see: *Cambridge Medieval History*, 7 (1932), 937-47; A. S. Freidus, *List of Works in the New York Public Library Relating to the History and Condition of the Jews in Various Countries* (1913; repr. from: *New York Public Library Bulletin*, 17 (1913), 537-86, 611-64, 713-834); G. Gabrieli, *Italia Judaica* (1924); Milano, Bibliotheca; Roth, Mag Bibl.; Lehmann, Nova Bibl.

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#### BEGINNING UNTIL THE MONARCHY

**The Patriarchs of Israel.** The beginning of the history of Israel, like that of many other nations, is obscure. The passage of time caused many features to fade from the memory of the people, while others were altered. Furthermore, the early period of Hebrew history, which was of decisive importance for Israel, did not leave any impres-



Figure 1. Tomb of the Middle Bronze Age (2000–1550 B.C.E.) at Jericho, containing household objects from the time of the Patriarchs. From K. M. Kenyon, *Excavation at Jericho*, Vol. I, London, 1960.



Figure 2. Shards of a pottery bowl found in Thebes, Upper Egypt, 19th–18th century B.C.E. inscribed with one of the Execration Texts. These contain maledictions on named enemies of Egypt, and mention cities and tribes under its control in the Palestine area. From K. Sethe, *Die Aechtung Feindlicher Fuersten, Voelker und Dinge auf Altaegyptischen Tongefaessscherben des mittleren Reiches*, Berlin, 1926.

sions on the environment in which the ancestors of Israel lived and functioned; and therefore, no external evidence concerning the beginning of the process of national consolidation has been found.

The Bible is the only source on the lives and activities of the \*Patriarchs, and the traditions it preserves about them are evaluated very differently by different scholars (see \*Genesis). There are those who completely negate the historicity of the Patriarchs and their period, regarding the pertinent biblical data as myths or literary epics; while others discern in these stories cores of historical facts overgrown with later revision and editing. The difficulties that the biblical narratives raise for historical research relegate the dispute about the actual existence of the Patriarchs to a secondary place. At present, research is focusing on attempts to discover the period and the political, ethnic, and cultural background that was likely to have served as the setting for the emergence of the nation. The fixing of an exact period and background transforms figures such as the Patriarchs into real beings even if the question concerning the existence of the specific biblical personalities remains a matter of dispute. Because the Book of Genesis has been held to contain obscure chronological allusions, anachronistic descriptions (\*Philistines and \*Arameans; camels), and later adaptations, and redactions, no way has been found of utilizing it for the purposes of chronology. Therefore, sources other than the Bible, such as epigraphical and archaeological finds from the Fertile Crescent, are employed as indirect proof of the reality reflected in the patriarchal narratives. Most scholars date the patriarchal period to the first half of the second millennium. It is during this period that West Semitic (\*Amorite) elements began their migrations and movements in \*Mesopotamia. These West Semitic elements also increased their migrations west of the Euphrates, becoming nomads or settling in new, or already existing settlements. The Egyptian Execration Texts dating from the 19th–18th centuries B.C.E. provide clear evidence of the integration of these Western Semites in the city states of Syria and Palestine and of the existence of West Semitic rulers,

especially in the plains and coastal areas which were then under Egyptian control. It can be seen that the mountain regions, on the other hand, were underpopulated. Apparently the Western Semites reestablished the settlements in Transjordan and within a limited period (19th century B.C.E.) brought prosperity to the settlements in the Negev and Sinai along the routes to Egypt.

According to evidence provided in Genesis and in extra-biblical sources \*Abraham's family was of West Semitic origin. His migrations from \*Ur of the Chaldeans to \*Haran, which was a center for West Semitic tribes, and from there to Palestine, are part of the general migrations of the Western Semites in that period. Abraham and his descendants traveled along the routes in the hill country and in the Negev. In these regions they were able to find subsistence and pasturage for their cattle and, most important, were able to avoid conflicts with the denser population in the plains and Egyptian garrisons stationed there. This description appears to be realistic in light of the urban picture that emerges from the Execration Texts. At the same time, the Patriarchs' sojourn in the Negev and their migration south to \*Egypt takes on a realistic dimension against the background of the existence of settlements along the trade routes in this period. The connection between the Patriarchs and the Western Semites, and their existence in the first half of the second millennium, is attested by a comparison between Genesis and written sources from Mesopotamia, which reflect the material and spiritual world of that period. Those sources afford typological parallels which make it probable not only that the chronological basis is the same but also that the onomastic background, the dialect, the way of life, and the customs are common to the Patriarchs and the Western Semites. Documents dating from about the 18th century B.C.E. found in the royal archives of \*Mari on the Middle Euphrates include useful evidence about organizations of West Semitic tribes, their patriarchal society, ways of life, leadership, and wanderings. The \*Nuzi documents are also very important because they shed light on various aspects of the family customs and laws that governed the households of Abraham, \*Isaac, and \*Jacob. The Nuzi documents illustrate the mixed Semitic and \*Hurrian society of Nuzi in the 15th–14th century B.C.E. It is generally assumed that those traditions preserved in these documents, which deal with family and judicial matters, were influenced by an ancient West Semitic tradition. According to another opinion, the connection between the Patriarchs and the way of life of Nuzi derives from another source, i.e., from the Hurrians who lived in the region of Haran in the 18th century B.C.E.

By the 19th century B.C.E. and perhaps even earlier, the first waves of Western Semites arrived in Egypt, at the southern edge of the Fertile Crescent. In the course of the following centuries these peoples declined under the pressure of foreign ethnical elements of Indo-European and Hurrian origin, who invaded certain regions of Mesopotamia, \*Syria, and Palestine and sought to establish themselves there. Allusions to these events, which occurred in the second quarter of the second millennium B.C.E., are preserved mainly in documents recovered by archaeological expeditions. However, an Egyptian tradition in the Hellenistic period (see \*Manetho) preserved the memory of a wave of Western Semites and non-Semitic foreign groups which it called \*Hyksos, a corruption of an ancient Egyptian term for "rulers of foreign lands" referring to Asiatics. From later sources it seems clear that the Hyksos gained control over large areas in Egypt and set up their headquarters in the Delta region of the Nile, which is the biblical \*Goshen. They established an empire and main-

tained relations with Syria and Palestine. Royal dynasties were descended from them (XV–XVI Dynasties); names like Yaqob-har, Anat-har, Khyan, etc. indicate that they were of Semitic origin. It appears that the wanderings of the Patriarchs and the migration of Jacob's sons to Egypt were connected with the rule of the Hyksos there, because the migration of a West Semitic family to Egypt, then under control of Western Semites, could not have been an unusual occurrence, especially since it can be proved that the Egyptians permitted wandering shepherds to sojourn in the Delta region during years of famine. Further, \*Joseph's rise to prominence seems more likely to have occurred at the time of the Hyksos rule than during the native Egyptian rule, when cooperation with foreigners in many areas was avoided. The alien rule in Egypt ended in 1570 B.C.E., when the Hyksos were driven out by the natives. This date can serve as the *terminus ad quem* of the patriarchal period. After the establishment of the New Kingdom in Egypt those political, ethnic, and social conditions which served as an ideal background for the activities of the ancient Hebrews no longer prevailed.

Another opinion places the patriarchal period at a later time, based on the accepted dating of the conquest of \*Canaan (13th century B.C.E., see below) and on genealogical and chronological data in the Bible, according to which \*Moses' generation is the fourth after Jacob. Thus, the 14th century was fixed as a suitable time for the patriarchal period. There are, however, gaps and inaccuracies in the chronological and genealogical data of the Bible, which are, moreover, mutually contradictory. Thus the number of years that the Hebrews sojourned in Egypt is given as 400 years (Gen. 15:13) or 430 years (Ex. 12:40), which is far more than four generations. In the light of the evidence it seems that the accepted dating of the patriarchal period is more accurate. The patriarchal narratives in Genesis describe the seminomadic way of life of the Patriarchs and their distinctive patriarchal society. The Patriarchs supported themselves by raising cattle, sheep, and goats (only Isaac engaged in seasonal agriculture in the western Negev, Gen. 26:12); they lived in tents in camps on the outskirts of the cities and were protected by the rulers of the sedentary population. They avoided mingling with the sedentary population, preserving their ethnic purity and their unique beliefs. Nevertheless, conflicts with the permanent elements sometimes could not be avoided (Gen. 34). Biblical accounts and non-biblical parallels do not strengthen the view accepted by other important scholars that the Patriarchs were caravan merchants active in the international trade conducted from north to south in the Fertile Crescent. Light is also shed on the sociological makeup of the Patriarchs by the connection between the biblical designation "Hebrew" and the appellation for the social class \*Habiru (Hapiru) or 'Apiru, known from many sources, and current in the Ancient East over a long period. In the Bible non-Israelites called the Patriarchs and their descendants "Hebrews" (e.g., Gen. 39:17; 41:12) and the Israelites themselves used this name to identify themselves when dealing with foreigners (Gen. 40:15). Thus the name "Hebrew" came to designate Israel on the social level and did not refer to their obscure ethnic origin. If there is any comparison to be made between "Hebrew" and Habiru, it is that the Hebrews belonged to this large class of people who were scattered over a wide area and consisted of nomads or vagabonds who lived on the margins and under the protection of societies whose laws did not apply to them. Their relation to their Canaanite hosts is that of *gerim* or metics (Gen. 23:4), and Canaan is the land of their *megurim* or sojourn as metics (Gen. 17:8; 28:4;



Figure 3. One of the Nuzi documents, 15th–14th century B.C.E., which provide information about the Semite-Hurrian society. From T. J. Meek, *Excavations at Nuzi*, 3 (1935).

36:7; 37:1; 47:9; Ex. 6:4; see \*Stranger). From all that has been said thus far it may be assumed that the general term "Hebrew" (meaning the Habiru) was applied only at a later stage to the tribes of Israel as a branch of this class and thus became an ethnic designation. It is possible that their non-Israelite neighbors, because they regarded the ancient Hebrews as a component of the general class of Habiru, ignored those specific features which distinguished this small group from the other Habiru and West Semitic elements.

**The Exodus and Wanderings in Sinai.** The Bible describes the Hebrews' migration to Egypt and their stay at Goshen as a favor bestowed upon them because of Joseph who had attained prominence in Egypt. There is no external evidence about their life and activities there. The Bible relates that after a certain period they were subjugated by the pharaohs. It is actually not unreasonable to suppose that after the expulsion of the Hyksos the Egyptians should have enslaved kindred Semitic elements still living in Egypt. Therefore the story of the slavery of the Israelites and their Exodus from Egypt should not be dismissed as unhistorical, especially since, as attested in an Egyptian papyrus, an occurrence such as the escape of the slaves from Goshen to the Sinai desert was not rare. It is of the utmost importance to fix accurately the date of the Exodus from Egypt, especially in light of the various traditions existing in the Bible (see \*Exodus). It should be noted in this connection that the enslaved Hebrews were exploited in order to build the cities of Pithom and Raamses (Ex. 1:11) and there is no doubt that these were built in the reign of \*Ramses II (c. 1290–24). This pharaoh built his new capital Per-Ra'mses (biblical Raamses) on the site of the ancient Hyksos capital. He also reconstructed Per-Atum (biblical Pithom). Also useful is the evidence found in an Egyptian papyrus, from the period of Ramses II, according to which the 'Apiru (Habiru) participated in the building of Ramses' temple. From this it can be deduced that Pharaoh, the oppressor of the Israelites, "who knew not Joseph" (Ex. 1:8), is Ramses II. On the other hand a suitable background for the Exodus is the reign of just this pharaoh even if according to the biblical tradition it happened during the reign of the successor of pharaoh of the

oppression (Ex. 2:23; cf. 15). It seems that the conflict of that period between the \*Hittites and Ramses II had an influence on the suppressed nomadic elements who took advantage of the events to escape from Egypt. Another possibility is that the Exodus from Egypt occurred during the reign of \*Merneptah, Ramses II's son. In a stele from the fifth year of his reign (c. 1220) celebrating Merneptah's defeat of his enemies in Palestine, "Israel" is mentioned as a sedentary element, probably in the process of conquest. On the other hand, there are scholars who maintain that the mention of "Israel" in the stele refers to Israelite elements who never migrated to Egypt. Another opinion maintains that it hints at an earlier exodus from Egypt. The discussion of the Exodus is clearly connected with the Israelite Conquest of Canaan. As will be seen below, the main Conquest occurred in the 13th century B.C.E. This dating is also attested in the Bible (I Kings 6:1) which mentions 480 years between the Exodus from Egypt to the building of Solomon's Temple (c. 970 B.C.E.), a period of 12 generations according to the schematic biblical counting (cf. Ps. 95:10). A more realistic estimate of 12 generations as 300 years would place the Exodus in the 13th century (cf. Judg. 11:26).

The Exodus from Egypt left its imprint on the memory of the nation and became the symbol of the hope of liberation for all generations. Apparently many details about the Exodus and the journey in the desert were blurred, perhaps as a result of the special attitude of the Hebrews to these events. It is no wonder that legends and stories of miracles were combined with the account of these events. It is obvious that the main reason for the preservation of various traditions in the present form was the idea that the Exodus from Egypt was a divine act which preceded the revelation at \*Sinai, the dwelling place of the God of Israel where the Torah was given. According to tradition, the essence of Israel's uniqueness as the chosen people was expressed at the revelation at Sinai. Various analytical trends, especially those with fundamentalist inclinations, see in the revelation at Sinai those historic days when the tribes were consolidated into a nation and their monotheistic belief purified under the leadership of an outstanding personality—\*Moses.

No evidence has been found to support the miraculous biblical descriptions nor have the geographical aspects of the journey of the Hebrews in the Sinai desert been clarified yet. Even the location of the \*Red Sea, where Pharaoh and his soldiers died, and of Mt. Sinai, are unknown. These sites are usually established by reconstructions of the journeys. It would seem that there is no reason to doubt the reliability of the biblical account according to which the Hebrews did not choose the shortest way to Canaan "through the way of the land of the Philistines" (Ex. 13:17), i.e., the road along the seashore of the Mediterranean to Egypt. The reason they did not choose this route was that they wanted to avoid confrontation with the Egyptian forces stationed in the fortresses along "the way of the land of the Philistines" which defended the approaches to Egypt. The indirect journey was difficult and very long, and was dependent on places with drinking water and oases. There is no doubt that the journey in the desert ended in \*Kadesh-Barnea, an oasis with abundant water in northwestern Sinai. From here the Israelites attempted to penetrate Canaan. On the basis of biblical descriptions and archaeological evidence it becomes obvious that those attempts to penetrate Canaan were actually part of a general phenomenon of invasion and settlement on the part of elements akin to the Hebrews that took place in this geographical area around this time, especially in Transjordan where permanent settlements were reestablished either at the end of the 14th century or in the 13th century B.C.E. by \*Ammon, \*Moab, \*Edom, and

the Amorites. Egypt's inability to defend the border of the desert from nomadic tribes while she was involved in the war against the Hittites enabled those Western Semitic elements to consolidate in Transjordan, where settlements had ceased to exist a few centuries earlier.

**The Conquest and Settlement of Canaan.** There are grave difficulties in reconstructing the Conquest of Canaan by the tribes of Israel. The various biblical sources dealing with this subject are heterogeneous and there are many contradictory descriptions. Moreover, there are also inconsistencies in important details between these sources and archaeological finds. The biblical evidence, especially that which is found in Joshua, gives the impression that it had gone through a selective and unified editing. It is possible that the national memory, too, followed the same process, so that different traditions, which existed among various tribes or in different places, were reduced to a common denominator, until an "official" version of the history of the Conquest was formulated. This version represents the Conquest as a single campaign that was conducted according to an earlier plan which distributed the country in advance and was led by a sole leader, Moses, and later Joshua. Apart from this version there is other evidence that points to an entirely different situation. This evidence is to be found especially in \*Judges 1 and indirectly in the genealogical lists at the beginning of I \*Chronicles, in poetic compositions, and in other sources. The contradictory evidence points to a relatively long, heterogeneous process of conquest, which lacked advance planning, and in which individual tribes or tribal groups gradually conquered their territories, leaving Canaanite enclaves which had not been conquered at all (including towns which are mentioned in the Book of Joshua as having been conquered). It seems that contemporary reality necessitated a slow, continuous series of conquests and it is precisely this reality which emerges from the evidence that contradicts the "official" version.

Kadesh-Barnea, which marked the end of the journey of the tribes of Israel in the desert, was also the starting point of the Israelite attempts to enter Canaan. Probably at a certain stage they tried to go north straight to the Negev but they were deterred by a chain of Canaanite fortresses (Num. 14:40-45; 21:1-9; Deut. 1:43-46). This failure made them seek new solutions. The beginning of the process of conquest apparently occurred at the end of the 14th century B.C.E. and continued during the 13th century B.C.E. The biblical tradition about the Conquest of Transjordan places this event approximately at the beginning of the settlement of Ammon, Moab, and Edom (Num. 21:21), while Merneptah's stele from about 1220 indicates that during that year the Conquest was still in progress (see above). Two different traditions about the mode and journeys of the Conquest are found in the Bible. The best-known one is that which appears in Numbers 20:14ff., according to which the Israelites circumvented Edom because its ruler did not allow them to pass through his country. They therefore penetrated through a weak point in Transjordan, which was the Amorite kingdom of \*Heshbon, whose king \*Sihon had conquered the territory from the first Moabite king (Num. 21:21ff.). The Amorites' presence in eastern Transjordan is explained, according to one theory, as a southern migration of certain elements from the kingdom of Amurru in central Syria, in consequence of the battle between the Hittites and the Egyptians during Ramses II's reign. From here on, the tribes of Israel succeeded in enlarging their holdings east of the Jordan as far as Bashan.

Another tradition was preserved in Numbers 33, which records the Israelites' march right through Edom and Moab and lists their stations on the way to Jericho. In the

description of this route there is no mention of the kingdoms of Transjordan or of the bypassing of the populated areas on the desert's border as recorded in the previous tradition. In light of the contradiction between the two traditions, the following supposition arises. There were probably two waves of penetration into Canaan. The earlier one proceeded without difficulties along the plateau of Transjordan to \*Jericho, at a time when this area was still desolate, i.e., the end of the 14th century B.C.E. The second wave could not follow the same route because of the new kingdoms which had been established there in the meantime; it therefore had to bypass Edom and Moab and then force its way through the Amorite kingdom north of the Arnon. The time of this second wave was thus later, probably the 13th century. Although this supposition contradicts the spirit of the biblical texts whose aim is to produce a picture of a unified conquest, it offers a solution to the contradiction between the two traditions without negating either of them. It also supports and supplements the above-mentioned passages which suggest a complex and long drawn-out process of conquest. The two waves of migration to Canaan suggest that there may have been two waves of Exodus from Egypt, and perhaps also two wanderings in the wilderness of Sinai, especially when the abortive attempt to penetrate the Negev and the bypassing of Edom are attributed to the second wave. It is difficult to decide about the components of these waves. Although it is generally accepted that they consisted of the tribes of Leah, Rachel, and the concubines, scholars disagree as to the order in which these groups entered Canaan. Some assume that the Leah tribes migrated first, though according to the order of the earlier journey, which terminated at Jericho as mentioned in Numbers 33, it is more likely that the Rachel tribes (called also "The House of Joseph") were those who first invaded Canaan, the land west of the Jordan, without stopping on its east bank. Therefore, it would be a mistake to assume that the campaigns of these two waves were carried out according to the schematic description in Joshua. It seems more likely that these were "waves" in a very broad sense, and neither of them was necessarily a unified and planned undertaking. It seems that the waves of penetration were actually a pattern which points to frequent penetrations of individual tribes or groups of tribes.

The archaeological finds usually support the biblical evidence concerning the Conquest, except for a few instances of inconsistency. Research has not yet disclosed acceptable solutions to these inconsistencies: 1) The description of the conquest of \*Ai by Joshua is contradicted by the fact that this place was desolate during the period of the Israelite penetration of Canaan (Josh. 7-8). It is possible that it was confused with the neighboring Beth-El (cf. Judg. 1:22ff.). 2) The dramatic description of the conquest of Jericho (Josh. 5-6) is not proportionate to the archaeological evidence which shows that Jericho was a small unvalled and unimportant town. On the other hand, archaeological finds in various sites of Palestine and surveys clearly indicate that many towns (as Beth-El, Tell Beit Mirsim, Beth-Shemesh, Eglon, Hazor, etc.) were destroyed during the 13th century and at the beginning of the 12th century B.C.E. Small and impoverished settlements were established on the ruins of these towns by people whose standard of material culture was below that of the former population. Some were established in the same period in which the towns were destroyed, while others were established later. In addition, during this period new settlements were established on entirely new sites by the same impoverished elements. It should be noted that the destruction of the Canaanite towns did not occur during a short period; this also fits into the picture of a gradual Conquest by separate

conquering units. From the archaeological finds it becomes clear that the Israelites failed to conquer the whole country, and that Canaanite enclaves remained (e.g., Shechem), which were conquered later and not during the period which is described as the period of the Conquest. This fact, too, corroborates the testimony of the biblical texts which contradict the version of a single planned campaign.

**DETAILS OF SETTLEMENT.** The Conquest of Canaan and the settlement of the tribes of Israel in the land actually constituted one continuous process, with no intervening lapses. For this reason the account of the Conquest has to be accompanied by the description of the settlement in Canaan. The biblical sources make possible only a partial reconstruction, along general lines, of the conquest and the settlement. The tribes of Rachel proceeded from Jericho through \*Gilgal to the central hill country northward to Shechem. \*Manasseh settled in the territory north of Shechem and later expanded to the plains and Transjordan. It is likely that the tribe of Manasseh became consolidated in the course of the settlement through the unification of strong sub-tribal units. \*Ephraim settled between Manasseh's territory and the region north of Beth-El. The small tribe of \*Benjamin was confined into a narrow strip of land between Ephraim and a chain of Canaanite cities in the south, and \*Hivite cities in the west (Chephirah, Kiriath-Jearim, Beeroth, Gibeon) which the Israelites did not conquer and with which they even made alliances (Josh. 9:3). It seems that the settlement of the "House of Joseph" tribes and their connection with the Hivite cities endangered the position and existence of the Canaanite kingdom of Jerusalem and its allies in the south. They waged war but were defeated (Josh. 10:1ff.). The Leah tribes constituted, as mentioned above, the second wave of conquerors and settlers. Some of them, \*Reuben and \*Gad, settled in Transjordan. Reuben maintained its seminomadic way of life on the eastern fringe of Gilead (I Chron. 5:9-10). Gad, on the other hand, settled south of the Jabbok and from there expanded to the north. The rest of the Leah tribes went west. \*Judah and \*Simeon together crossed the central Jordan and then went south through the territories of the "House of Joseph." At first, Judah succeeded in conquering Jerusalem but failed to keep it for long. It was then conquered by the \*Jebusites, an ethnic element of northern (Anatolian?) origin. Judah came close to the seashore but there too failed to keep the conquered territory. Its original territory was between Hebron and Bethlehem. Judah absorbed, in a prolonged process of assimilation, kindred ethnic elements, which they conquered or which had settled in the south before Judah reached it. While Simeon settled in the Negev, it never became a permanently settled tribe, but continued to lead a seminomadic life. In the course of time part of its territory was absorbed into that of Judah. Other Leah tribes settled in the north. Less is known of their mode of conquest and settlement. Asher settled in western Galilee and expanded toward the seashore from the Carmel to Tyre. There is a special problem in connection with this tribe, because of the mention of the name "Asher" in Egyptian sources—an indication that the tribe had been in Canaan before the conquest. Some scholars deduce from this that this tribe was not among those who went to Egypt. \*Issachar settled in southeastern Galilee and in a small area of the Shephelah. There are some scholars who assume that this tribe too had been in Canaan before the Conquest, on the basis of the Beth-Shean stele of Seti I (beginning of the 13th century) which mentions alien 'Apiru (Habiru) in territory which is included in Issachar's lands. \*Naphtali settled in central and eastern Galilee, the Jordan Valley, and Chinneroth Valley. \*Zebulun settled mainly in southwestern Lower Galilee.

The location of the new Israelite territory and also the success of the Conquest raised many questions. Various political and geographic conditions aided the Israelites. Egypt's inability to deal with the specific problems of Canaan in that period left the population defenseless against invaders who employed special tactics appropriate to their social structure, fighting skill, and armament. However, it should not be forgotten that the Israelites' success in conquering Canaan was limited, insofar as they failed to occupy the plains, whose dense population was defended by strong fortresses and chariots which the tribes could not overcome (e.g., Josh. 17:16-18). Moreover, it is not impossible that the Egyptians intentionally concentrated their defense on vital interests in those regions which seemed to them decisively important: the districts along the routes of communication which passed through the plains and along the coast. Actually the tribes of Israel occupied only the hill country where the Canaanites were not able to use their chariots and the southern regions that were



Figure 4. Facsimile of stela of Seti I (c. 1313-1292 B.C.E.) found in Beth-Shean. The ninth and tenth lines mention "these 'Apiru [Habiru] of the mountains of Jordan [Gilead]." The reference is to an attack by the Habiru. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, Israel Department of Antiquities.

underpopulated or not populated at all. The Israelites also had to face the resistance of the Canaanite settlements which were within the borders of their territories. They succeeded in conquering only part of them. In light of facts found in various passages of Joshua and in Judges 1, it becomes obvious that in a few places Israelites were subjugated by the Canaanites. The general picture of the settlement points to four Israelite regions, separated by narrow strips of fortified Canaanite cities. This picture, as is known, follows the topographic structure of Palestine and emphasizes the contrast between the population of the mountainous regions and the population of the plains. The northern region of settlement was bordered on the south by a strip of plains (Jezreel and Beth-Shean) with fortifications ranged from Beth-Shean to Megiddo. Further, even in the territories of the northern tribes there were numerous Canaanite enclaves which undermined the unity of the Israelites; the large block of central mountains was between the Canaanites of the valleys and the chain of Canaanite fortresses in the south, starting with Jerusalem and ending in Gezer. This chain separated the central tribes from the southern tribes. Between these three blocks and the Israelite settlements in the east there was a natural border—the Jordan. Thus, the Canaanite fortresses interrupted the continuity of the Israelite settlement and prevented close contact among the groups of tribes. This isolation created specific local developments in each group of tribes and weakened their attachments to one another. It is noteworthy that the break between the central and southern tribes was so absolute that even the most reliable biblical sources (including the "Song of Deborah") do not mention the tribe of Judah at all as a component of the tribal alliance during the period of settlement.

Within the framework of the limited Israelite territory there began, according to the archaeological finds and surveys, a process of transition from the nomadic way of life to a permanent agricultural mode of life in small, generally unwallied settlements. They were faced with grave difficulties, in particular a lack of fields suitable for cultivation and a shortage of water. As a consequence, the settlers had to cut down the forests within their territories (Josh. 17:14–18). Archaeological research shows that the settlement was, to a great extent, made possible by a special technique of waterproof lime-plastered cisterns. In this way the Israelites were not tied down to the few available sources of water but could settle in areas which had never been settled before, thus expanding their borders. The Israelite settlement in the mountains was also facilitated by the use of iron implements which began about this period. Implements made of hard metal enabled the settlers to cultivate their fields more efficiently.

The settlement of the Israelites was accompanied by shifts and movements of tribal and sub-tribal units both within and without the tribe's territory. A variety of reasons motivated these units to seek new territories, including lack or shortage of land suitable for cultivation, pressure from Israelite or alien neighbors, etc. Evidence for such events is found especially in the genealogical lists in the Bible and in particular in I Chronicles 1–11. In the genealogical lists are included fragments of information and various traditions about tribal and sub-tribal movements. These genealogies give information on their wanderings, their attachments with (and separations from) kindred or alien elements, and their elevation and decline. The tribal genealogy was constructed in a schematic way using familial terminology. This clarifies various phenomena such as the affiliation of clans and families to two tribes which obviously attests the transition of tribes from one territory to another. Such relations existed between Judah and Reuben (cf. e.g., Josh.

7:18 with Num. 26:6) and between Asher, Ephraim, and Benjamin (Josh. 16:3; I Sam. 9:4; 13:17), among others. It is also known that Manassite families in the west migrated to Transjordan and that families from Ephraim moved in the same direction (II Sam. 18:6). A good example of the migration of a family-tribal unit is Dan who, because it was compressed between the territories of its brother tribes and of alien inhabitants of the plains, moved to the northern border of the Israelite territory (Judg. 18). As mentioned above, echoes of the absorption of alien elements into Israelite tribal units or territories are preserved in genealogical lists, in the terminology of matrimonial relations and by tracing their lineage to the ancestor of the tribe. Most instructive are the genealogical lists of the tribe of Judah which are very complicated (I Chron. 2:4:1–23). These lists show Judah's affiliation with Canaanite, Edomite, Horite, and Gileadite groups (as \*Ephrath, \*Caleb, \*Kenaz, \*Hur, \*Ethan, \*Heman, \*Machir, and others).

Similar affiliations and assimilation can be found also in the tribe of Manasseh, whose genealogy reflects the absorption of Canaanite territories. One can assume that the changes in the status of the tribes, the description of their achievements, their territories, and occupations as they appear in the Blessing of Jacob (Gen. 49), the Blessing of Moses (Deut. 33), and the Song of Deborah (Judg. 5) reflect changes that took place within the tribes during the settlement period. It seems, however, that the territories of the tribes as consolidated and written down in Joshua reflect a later period.

**SOME RESULTS OF SETTLEMENT.** The settlement of the tribes of Israel in Canaan brought about an essential change in their economy: the wandering shepherds became settled farmers and craftsmen. An important question is how and to what extent the settlement influenced the social structure of the Israelites, their tribal and sub-tribal organizations, and the intertribal relations. The Israelite society was essentially patriarchal-tribal, a fact which is reflected in their customs. In essence the patriarchal order persisted among the Israelites throughout the biblical period. Biblical society, however, was deeply attached to the nomadic way of life and its characteristic traditions. It seems that it was in the nomadic period that the small Israelite units with ethnic family ties and common traditions united into tribal structures. There is no doubt that the tribe remained the largest and most important political and social unit in the period of the Conquest as well. However, the transition to permanent settlement left its impact on the tribe and its leadership. The confrontation with permanent culture and its needs brought about changes in the relationships between various components of the tribe. Likewise the concept of tribal leadership changed (see \*Elder). The new challenges in the period of the Conquest brought about changes in all levels of leadership insofar as the patriarchal leadership had to adapt itself to the conditions of permanent settlement. Although the patriarchal pattern survived, the criteria for electing this leadership underwent changes. Although there are not many references to social problems in biblical sources much can be learned by reading between the lines about the decline of the tribe and the emergence of the largest sub-tribal unit—the \*family, with the parallel rise of the power of the clan. It seems that intertribal relationships weakened as a result of the conditions of settlement. Israel in Canaan was a group of tribes with weak political attachments. It was not a firmly consolidated framework with distinct political aims and characteristics.

There is disagreement among scholars as to how the unification of the tribes into a nation took place. One trend in research regards the revelation at Sinai as the time when

the tribes became a nation. Another trend is of the opinion that the settlement period was the formative stage in national consolidation. While the settlement period did, indeed, bring about changes, it is more likely that national consolidation took place in a later period, but in a literary-historical form was projected upon the settlement period and earlier. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that the tribes of Israel consisted of entirely separated and disconnected units. There were still common elements of vital importance: ethnic affinity, consanguinity, and a common religious-cultic tradition. This common tradition in its widest sense was able to take the place of the national consciousness that was lacking. These factors prompt a search for patterns of intertribal or supra-tribal organization that emphasizes the common elements among tribes without confronting the problem of political unity. Several possibilities have been advanced. One of the strongest propositions which has stimulated positive and negative responses maintained that there existed a supra-tribal organization, like the Amphictyony in ancient Greece and among the Etruscans in Italy. This organization with cultic-religious and political objectives united the tribes of Israel around a mobile sanctuary where the Ark of the Covenant was placed. The biblical sources do not offer much evidence in support of the existence of such an organization. There were, however, a number of tribal actions, as for example the narrative of the concubine in Gibeah (Judg. 19ff.), which give the impression that there actually existed some such supra-tribal organization. As is known, it illustrates an episode of internal conflict among the tribes and supra-tribal pressure on Benjamin. Moreover, the schematic pattern of 12 tribes, which always remains unchanged even if its components undergo changes—a fact which can be interpreted as the worship of the tribes around a sanctuary throughout the year—is a factor that cannot easily be ignored.

**The Judges.** The changes that Israel underwent are expressed in the characteristic features of its leadership. Most instructive is the fact that during the period of settlement there was no one leader of all the tribes or national leader—a clear indication that an overall national consciousness had not crystallized.

Nevertheless, the settlement period laid the foundation for a new type of leadership institution which had not existed previously. As it was a product of the period it rose and declined with it. The Bible defines the new type of leader as "judge." To the judge and his period a whole biblical book was dedicated, i.e., the Book of \*Judges.

This book is the only source of information about characteristics of the judge as a leader—his qualities and activities. However, Judges is only a selection of stories concerning a few judges, and does not describe all the judges who lived and functioned nor all the events that occurred in this period. These stories were included in the book in a pragmatic pattern and were edited so as to stress the overall national character of the judges' activity. According to the available data, all these tendentious ingredients date from a later period. It is obvious that the judge was the answer to the problem of leadership which appeared at a particular stage of the settlement period, when the neighbors started to react to Israel's existence in Canaan, in the hope of taking advantage of the weakness and disunity of the tribes. The judge was first of all a prominent tribal leader who was elevated to this position in time of crisis when an external menace threatened his tribe's existence. His period of leadership was limited to the time that was needed to subjugate the enemy. Authority was given to the judge by the traditional leaders of the tribe. He was also impelled by the spirit of God so that he would

succeed in his activities and that the faith of the people in his political and military skill would be strengthened. The divine favor that descended upon the judge increased his influence and authority over the tribe. Since the task of the judge was completed when the objective which made his leadership necessary had been attained, the principles of inheritance or pedigree which characterized the typical tribal leadership were not applied. This type of judging is not, as one might think, identical with the office of a judge in court. The Book of Judges presents two prototypes of the judges: 1) The charismatic leader, the "deliverer," who goes out to war against the enemies and defeats them (six: \*Othniel, \*Ehud, \*Deborah, \*Gideon, \*Jephthah, \*Samson). 2) The "minor" judge who did not accomplish heroic deeds on the battlefield but who possessed tribal pedigree (Judg. 10:1-5; 12:8-15). It appears that these two types of judges were current during the period which is named after them. This period probably was at a later stage in the settlement period.

Insufficient chronological evidence makes it difficult for the historian to reconstruct the dates of the events recounted in Judges. The same applies to the order of the judges from the point of view of their time and activity. In only isolated cases is it possible to show that a certain event preceded another one. Anyway, it is obvious that the order in which the stories concerning the judges appear is not necessarily parallel to any chronological order.

The background of the activity of the first judge, Othniel son of Kenaz, who fought against Chushan-Rishathaim king of Aram-Naharaim, is not all clear (Judg. 3:8-10). According to one theory his deliverance was connected with the invasion of the territory of Judah by a northern ruler in the 12th century B.C.E. Another opinion is that the reference is to an Edomite ruler. No less vague is the background of the deliverance story of Ehud son of Gera and the period in which it took place. There was, apparently, a Moabite invasion of Cisjordan which subjugated the territory of Benjamin (Judg. 3:12ff.). Taking advantage of the weakness and disunity of the Israelites, the Moabites succeeded in occupying parts of their territories in the center of the country for some time.

The section dealing with Samson belongs to a comparatively early period (Judg. 13-16). The historical nucleus of this episode is obscure, as a result of the literary-legendary nature of the stories. One can recognize that the background of the traditions about Samson are connected with the period marking the beginning of \*Philistine settlement; in any case, it took place before the migration of the tribe of Dan to the north (see above).

Another episode that attained special notice is the conflict between the tribes of Israel and the Canaanite element. It is possible that the battle of Deborah and Barak against the Canaanites illustrates a central event of the settlement period, a consequence of which was the liberation of the northern block of tribes from the increased pressure of the Canaanite chariotry. In the light of the parallel account in Joshua (Josh. 11:1ff.), this narrative presents many difficulties which have increased with the excavations at \*Hazor. According to one opinion Hazor and \*Jabin are a later addition to the story, and the Canaanite elements who took part in the battle were from the entrances to the valley of Jezreel. The Canaanite army was defeated in a battle at the foot of Mt. Tabor by Israelite troops, who took advantage of topographic and climatic advantages. Relatively many Israelite tribes participated in this battle (all the central and some of the northern tribes). In their victory they destroyed the Canaanite hegemony in the north including the valley of Jezreel. Moreover, for the first time territorial continuity was established between the



northern tribes and the group of central tribes (Judg. 4-5).

The battle of Deborah and Barak should be dated, it seems, to the second half of the 12th century B.C.E. when the Philistines were in the country. This conclusion is based on the fact that the battle is recorded after mention is made of the judge \*Shamgar son of Anath who fought against the Philistines, and also on the fact that the tribe of Dan is mentioned as living in its northern territory. Another consideration is that \*Taanach in the Song of Deborah is mentioned as being "by the waters of Megiddo." This testifies to the latter's destruction which has been proved to have taken place in the last quarter of the 12th century B.C.E.

The Canaanite opposition was broken, and this destroyed the fragile balance of power in the north. There were no more Canaanite fortresses to stand in the way of peoples who looked enviously upon the fertile fields of the plains. The raiders of the border regions of the desert, being aware of the new situation, poured across the Jordan on their way west. The Midianites, and those accompanying them (Judg. 6:3-5; 7:12), plundered the Canaanite and Israelite settlements. The Israelites were the greater sufferers, since they lived in unwalled settlements until they were delivered by Gideon's troop which, was supported by Gideon's tribe Manasseh and by the northern tribes. Gideon decisively defeated the Midianites and pursued them into Transjordan.

The Bible relates that after Gideon's victory he was offered the kingship, but he declined the royal honor (Judg. 8:22-23). However, there are many indications in the stories about Gideon that he still occupied a high position after his task was accomplished, some of which may be interpreted as signs of kingship: his receiving a portion of the spoil of the tribes, his marrying many women, and his making Ophrah, his hometown, into a religious center by erecting a sanctuary there in which he placed an ephod (Judg. 8:24-27). In addition, there are allusions to political and military control that he exercised over the Canaanite city of Shechem. After Gideon's death, his son \*Abimelech (Judg. 9) attempted to succeed to his position by utilizing the relations his father had with Shechem, his mother's native city. After disposing of all potential rivals to the succession, he attempted to exert his authority over Shechem by forming an alliance with the city's nobility. He also planned to maintain his authority among the Israelite tribes. However, Abimelech's efforts ended in failure with the destruction of Shechem (which is attested by the Bible and archaeological excavations at the site), shortly after which he died.

The Israelites' offer of kingship to Gideon has often been interpreted as the first sign of a change in the attitude of tribal leadership toward centralized rule—a change whose results were not felt until later. Scholars have seen in the Abimelech episode an experiment in imitating non-Israelite rule, and the creation of a transitional stage between a tribal order and a monarchy. However, these two stories concerning Gideon and Abimelech are actually only isolated episodes which had no sequel. Thus it is difficult to deduce from them to what extent they were the precursors of the establishment of monarchy in Israel, although they are instructive in their own right.

At the end of the 12th century or the beginning of the 11th century B.C.E. Ammon in eastern Transjordan became stronger, thus endangering the existence of Israelite settlers there. The elders of Gilead turned to Jephthah and his troop for assistance against the Ammonites and in return they bestowed a special position upon him (Judg. 10:17ff.). At first Jephthah attempted to settle the dispute by means of diplomacy, but when that failed, he repelled the

Ammonites, but did not defeat them completely. It seems that not long after, the Ammonites once again attacked the Israelite territory in the Gilead in the time of Samuel and Saul.

#### KINGDOMS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

##### Samuel and Saul: The Beginnings of Israelite Monarchy.

The heavy Philistine subjection of Israel provoked resistance among the two most oppressed tribes, Benjamin and Ephraim. Given the nature of Israel's tribal organization, it was natural that the centers of resistance were in the hill country, where the influential spiritual leader \*Samuel, the seer, was active and guided the spirit of rebellion. Among Samuel's activities was the first active attempt to overthrow Philistine rule—an Israelite rally at Mizpah attacked the enemy and forced them to withdraw temporarily to the Shephelah (I Sam. 7:7-12). Their oppression again brought home to the tribes the advantages of centralized government, which they had already felt in dealing with the neighboring Canaanite city-states. The division inherent in the weak tribal organization that led to defeat in the Israelites' confrontation with well-organized forces which functioned on the principle of centralization encouraged a disposition to exchange the traditional leadership of the elders, and even the charismatic leadership of the judges, for a stronger leadership which on the one hand would embody the qualities of a leader who rallied the tribes, and on the other convert his leadership into a permanent institution. There appears to have been a desire among the Israelites for leadership based first and foremost on military capabilities, with authority succeeding by inheritance, in the spirit of the suggestion made to Gideon. It is doubtful that the intention was to establish a ruler modeled on the example of the Canaanite king.

Samuel, to whom the leaders of the people turned to anoint a king over them, opposed the concepts widespread among the Israelites, but finally agreed. It is not surprising that the first Israelite king, \*Saul, resembled the charismatic judges, at the same time clearly displaying the qualities of being a ruler like those of "all the other nations." His selection was no doubt related to his military leadership exhibited in the liberation of Jabesh-Gilead, a city with blood and family ties to Benjamin, Saul's own tribe. The biblical description of Saul's anointment as king is not sufficiently explicit, however, as to whether his anointment did, in fact, result from his war with the Ammonites in northern Gilead. Considering the fact that Benjamin was still subject to the rule of the Philistines of the Shephelah, it is surprising that there is no mention of intervention on their part in the activities of Saul. It seems that they considered them only a local matter. After a brief period of organization, however, Saul turned his power in their direction. Near Michmas, northeast of Jerusalem, the Philistine armies were routed and driven back to Philistia. Their control of the mountain areas was thus broken, although the Philistines remained a threat to Israel throughout Saul's life. The battles were renewed periodically, since the Philistines did not easily relinquish their hold on Israelite territories. In one attack the Philistine armies penetrated to the vale of Elah, where \*David, a young warrior from Bethlehem in Judah, defeated \*Goliath (I Sam. 17) while the soldiers from both sides watched the contest between them.

The expulsion of the Philistines marked the beginning of Saul's career. He then had to assert his authority over the Israelite population of the central mountain area and unite the tribes under his rule. It is in this context that his uprooting of the foreign enclaves in his tribe's portion—the Hivite cities which remained as a result of their covenant

with Joshua and the elders—must be seen. From biblical accounts of his wars with Moab, Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah (I Sam. 14:47), and possibly the Hagrites (I Chron. 5:10) in Transjordan, it is possible to conclude that Saul tried to attract the Israelite tribes in Transjordan by protecting them. He also fought the Amalekites who had penetrated into Judah, again to win this tribe over to him (I Sam. 15). The break between Saul and Samuel was exposed in this war, as the latter was dissatisfied with Saul's usurpation of authority, which he saw as offensive to sacred practices and to God's authority over Israel.

The Bible does not tell much about Saul's tactics in organizing his kingdom. It appears that he lacked sufficient time, or otherwise could not manage, to establish a truly central authority. He continued to rely upon the traditional tribal structures and institutions, raising members of his own family to important positions. There are, however, some signs of centralization during his rule, e.g., an indication of taxation and of royal landholdings from which Saul distributed property to his officers and others who were close to him. Of special significance is the establishment of a standing army, which was with him in his capital, Gibeath-Shaul (whose fortifications were rebuilt after its capture from the Philistines). Saul's concept of monarchy is also evidenced by his ambition to establish a dynasty of his descendants.

One of the most dramatic and moving sections of the Bible concerns Saul's relationship with David, who became a well-known military officer, the king's son-in-law, and friend of Jonathan, the heir apparent. David was forced to flee from Saul to the border regions of Judah and later as far as Gath, in Philistia. During his wanderings he gathered about him various elements which he fashioned into a band

of warriors. They helped protect the border settlements, and lived off the contributions earned from those thus protected. During his stay in Gath, David received Ziklag as a landholding and fortress, ranging out from there against tribes that endangered the population. It was there that he began to develop relations with the elders of Judah, who followed Saul.

Achish, king of Gath, and the Philistine chiefs prevented David and his band from joining the battle near Jezreel, where Saul and his sons died. In this war the Philistine armies penetrated the mountain area, with the Canaanite fortifications in the valley serving as their rear and support. This is yet another indication of how the Philistine hegemony extended far beyond the Shephelah base. Philistine rule over the central tribes was reestablished with the defeat of Saul. For this reason Eshbaal (\*Ish-Bosheth), the son of Saul, was able to reign only in Gilead—a region that kept faith with the line of their benefactor. The Bible lists the areas and tribes over which Eshbaal reigned, but these almost certainly reflect the kingdom of Saul, rather than of Eshbaal: Gilead, the Ashurites (=Asherites), Jezreel (the territory of Manasseh in the hills and that of the other tribes in the valley), Ephraim, Benjamin and "over all Israel" (II Sam. 2:9).

**The United Kingdom: David.** After the death of Saul, David settled in Hebron, the center of his own tribe, Judah. He was crowned by the elders of Judah, who had not accepted the monarchy until then. Within a few years he ruled over the rest of the tribes of Israel (II Sam. 5:5), which accepted his authority especially after Eshbaal's failure to establish his kingdom in Transjordan. At about the same time he captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites, converting it into the capital of the kingdom and the estate

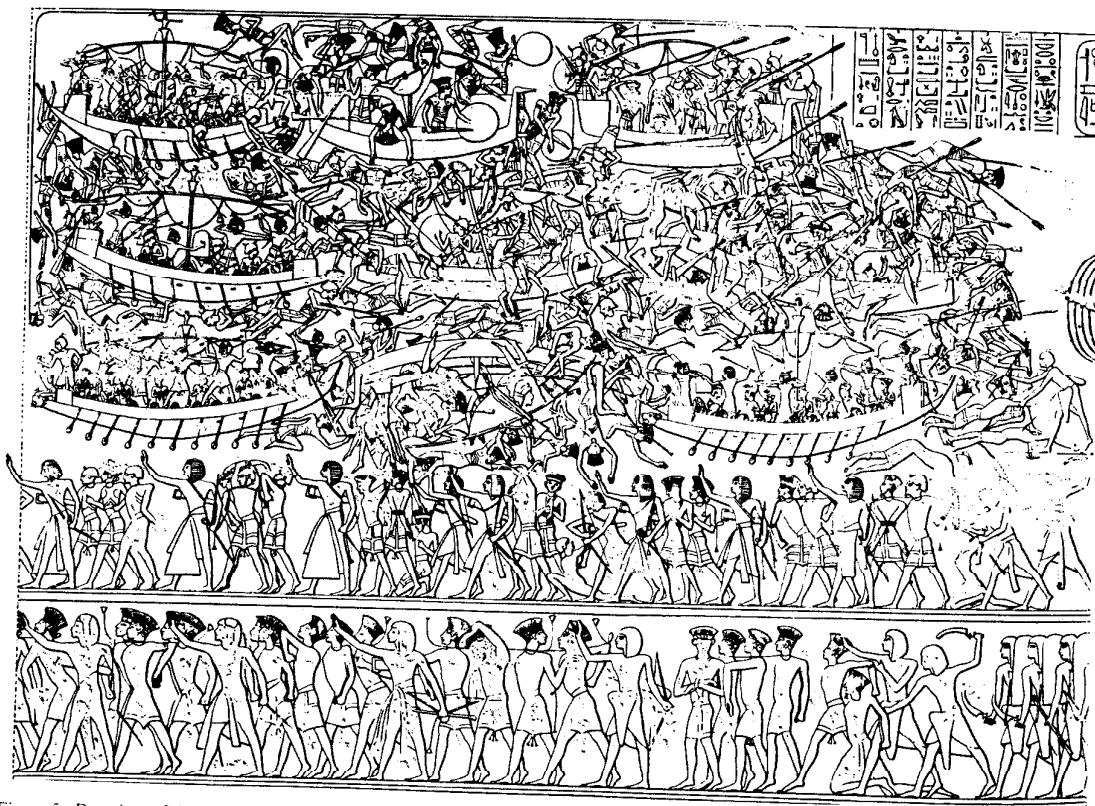


Figure 5. Drawing of Egyptian relief from Medinet Habu, depicting a sea battle between Pharaoh Ramses III and the Philistines in 1170 B.C.E. The Philistines can be identified by their feather headdresses. After H. Gressmann, *Altorientalische Bilder zum Alten Testament*, Leipzig, 1927, plate II, No. 112.

of the Davidic dynasty. This conquest revealed David's far-reaching ambitions and statesmanship, for Jerusalem in Israelite hands served as the desired unifying bond between the southern tribes—Simeon and Judah—and their brothers in the north. The new capital stood at the very heart of the kingdom, yet because it was outside the Israelite territory it did not serve as a focal point of strife among the tribes or lead to charges of favoritism.

With this decisive step David's aims became clear to the Philistines. It appears that until then they had hoped to rule over Judah by means of a vassal in Hebron. Now, however, they brought their army to the very gates of Jerusalem and were defeated by David (II Sam. 5:17–21). Another attempt that threatened to cut off Ephraim and Benjamin from David ended in failure; the Philistine force was broken and pursued to Gezer (II Sam. 5:22–25). The Philistines ceased to be a military power of any importance, and the route to the Shephelah was open to David. There is not much detailed evidence on how David exercised control over the Philistine cities. It appears that he did not actually conquer them, but maintained some type of loose control by means of which he received tributes and taxes, which served as a symbol of their subjugation. Even David's benefactor Achish, king of Gath, became an Israelite vassal (I Kings 2:39; I Chron. 18:1).

With the removal of this major military obstacle, David was able to take the first step toward converting his kingdom into a united national state—the creation of territorial continuity of all the tribes. In pursuing this goal David conquered foreign enclaves along the seacoast and in the fertile Jezreel and Beth-Shean valleys. A similar fate befell the non-Israelite population of Galilee. He also turned to eastern Transjordan in order to establish his rule over Ammon and Moab, which were endangering Israelite settlements there and controlled long stretches of the international "King's Highway." The Israelite threat also involved the Aramean kingdoms in Transjordan and Syria, which were summoned to the aid of Moab and Ammon. These allies were defeated by the Israelites, though not annihilated. After they recruited reinforcements from across the river they met David in battle and were routed this time (II Sam. 10:6–19). Vast territory fell to David—Transjordan and the Aramean kingdoms, including the valley of Lebanon. The Israelite borders now reached to \*Hamath, north of the valley and, judging by the borders at the beginning of Solomon's reign, David must have extended his rule as far as Tiphshah on the Euphrates (I Kings 5:4).

The Israelite empire established during David's reign became a major political and economic factor in Palestine and Syria. It bordered on two seas—the Mediterranean and the Red Sea—and two highways for international commerce, the "Via Maris" and the "King's Highway," traversed its length. It must be added that the existence and strengthening of David's kingdom was made possible not only by Israelite military initiative and the endeavors of its king, but also by a convenient international situation. During David's rule, the two traditional centers of power of the ancient Near East, Egypt and Mesopotamia, were on the decline. Thus, David was able to protect his achievements and conquests. David strengthened his rule by means other than military ones. He wisely established friendly relations that were reinforced by treaties with the kingdoms of Hamath and \*Tyre. The treaty with \*Hiram, king of Tyre, was particularly important because of the economic advantages flowing from connection with this maritime-commercial power to the Israelite position in international trade.

In the field of internal organization David concentrated

his activities on the establishment of an administrative apparatus suitable for the needs of the kingdom and the conquered territories. He understood the necessity of uniting the tribes round his throne and the capital, Jerusalem. He had the requisite organizational and executive abilities necessary to create proper tools.

It is difficult to determine what model was used to lay the foundation for the Israelite administration at the beginning of David's reign. It seems that the administration inherited from Saul was not developed and was not on a much higher plane than the traditional tribal institutions. It is reasonable to assume that as a Philistine vassal, David studied means of government, but it is almost certain that he was also influenced by the organizational structure of the non-Israelite cities in Palestine, especially that of Jebusite Jerusalem which he had conquered. It appears that the traditional administrative institutions of these cities were well adapted to the needs of a national monarchy consisting of tribes. (It is difficult to suppose, as do some scholars, that David built his administration according to an Egyptian prototype.) It is not surprising, therefore, that some of David's highest officials came from among non-Israelite elements, as they were experienced experts in tasks that had not been practiced in Israel in the absence of a court (II Sam. 5:11–18, 20:23–26; I Chron. 2:15–17). Candidates for such positions and others in institutions that had not existed in Israel until then, such as the institution of levy (\*corvée), could not easily be found. It is instructive, however, that control of the military forces remained in the hands of a relative of David, \*Joab, and Israelites close to him.

The vast conquests and consequent incomes required placing the king's lands and properties on a firm base. A special staff, which also employed foreign experts (I Chron. 27:25–31), was formed to oversee royal properties throughout the land. Among David's outstanding achievements was the integration of levites in administrative affairs. They were located in key religious and administrative centers, especially in sensitive areas of the kingdom. There were 48 of these cities, known as "cities of the levites" (see \*Levitical Cities), four for each tribe. As defined in the Bible, the task of the levites was to be responsible "for all the work of the Lord and for the service of the king" and "for every matter pertaining to God and for the affairs of the king" (I Chron. 26:30, 32). There is no doubt that the literacy of the levites and their religious-moral authority could be of service to the kingdom and the monarchy if properly exploited or channeled, and it would seem that David succeeded in doing so.

It appears that the division of the kingdom into 12 administrative districts—known from Solomon's time (I Kings 4:7–9)—began to crystallize during David's reign. The framework of these administrative districts did not include territories beyond the areas covered in the census conducted by David. The connection between the capital and the subjugated and dependent territories was effected through vassal kings or Israelite appointees.

The task of unification which David set before himself succeeded substantially in placing Jerusalem and the monarchy at the center of national life. Toward this end, David moved the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and made preparations for the construction of a royal palace and a central \*temple. Still, he did not entirely succeed in preventing the resentment and dissatisfaction of a tribal spirit opposed to the interests of the centralized monarchy, which, by their nature, undermined tribal individualism and the authority of tribal institutions. It appears to have been difficult to maintain, at one and the same time, a kingdom based on a developed administration—with all the royal needs—and separatist tendencies widespread among the



Figure 6. Remains of part of the Solomonic gate at Megiddo, tenth century B.C.E. Similar gates have been found at two more of Solomon's "cities for his chariots," Hazor and Gezer (I Kings 9:15-19). Courtesy Government Press Office, Tel Aviv.

tribes, whose life-styles were based upon a large degree of independence from factors beyond the tribal framework or the weak intertribal organization. Certain difficulties arose during David's reign. The population \*census (II Sam. 24) carried out on royal initiative, almost certainly for the purposes of \*taxation and recruiting, met with open opposition. Furthermore, natural disasters, added to the many wars, aggravated the dissatisfaction. It appears that the widespread dissatisfaction within the king's own tribe of Judah found expression in the revolt of \*Absalom (II Sam. 15-19), which was joined by other tribal elements. Only because of the loyalty of certain followers and the mercenary army, his personal guard, was David able to overcome the rebellion and return to Jerusalem. At a later stage, the revolt of \*Sheba, son of Bichri of Benjamin, who attracted a following from among all the tribes except Judah, shook the throne. The source of the revolt may have been the widespread feeling of discrimination in favor of Judah, the king's tribe. In this incident David was able to extricate himself from the rebellion with the help of those loyal to him and supporters in his own tribe.

At the end of David's reign, a bitter struggle developed over the succession to the throne. It divided the court into the followers of \*Adonijah, who claimed the throne by reason of seniority, and the supporters of \*Solomon—the son of \*Bath-Sheba—who succeeded in eliciting the support of the aging king. Under their influence, David crowned Solomon in his lifetime in order to preserve the continuity of dynasty desired by him. This act did not pass without drastic opposition on the part of Adonijah and his followers.

**Solomon.** Biblical historiography represents Solomon, with considerable justification, as a wise sovereign who sought justice and peace. He had inherited an empire founded through warfare and unending crises and reigned over a people that had begun to become accustomed to a centralized framework. Most of his activities thus tended toward the strengthening and development of his father's achievements through political, economic, and administrative means. Through a series of treaties made with neighboring kings, which he reinforced by politically-motivated marriages, he sought to insure tranquillity within the borders of his kingdom. The Bible comments negatively on these marriages because they involved, for diplomatic reasons, the introduction of foreign cults into Jerusalem (I Kings 11:1-14). In particular, Solomon cultivated ties with Hiram, king of Tyre, and Sidon. Like his father, he benefited from these relations by receiving the support of Hiram's fleet to import essential raw materials,

securing his technological assistance in building projects, and in exploiting natural resources and the development of his own fleet. Another treaty, also reinforced by marriage, was made with the pharaoh Siamun, who, according to one theory, had attempted to penetrate Judah during the second half of Solomon's reign. When he failed to achieve this, he gave his daughter to the king of Israel in marriage, along with the city of Gezer as a dowry (I Kings 9:16).

During Solomon's reign, which was for the most part peaceful, the natural geopolitical advantages of Palestine became apparent. By exploiting his control of the international roads and his hold on ports on two seas, he provided great impetus to the development of international trade. To this end he formed a cadre of royal merchants with a fleet that sailed great distances. Exotic products, precious metals, and rare fauna flowed into the kingdom by sea in exchange for copper mined and worked in plants established specifically for this purpose (I Kings 9:26-28; 10:11, 22). Special attention was given to overland trade with the Arabian peninsula. It appears that commercial connections were the major reason for the well-known visit of the Queen of Sheba to Jerusalem (I Kings 10:1-10). The corps of royal traders was involved in international commerce, purchasing horses from Anatolia and chariots from Egypt for resale to other kings in the area (I Kings 10:28-30). The monopolistic nature of Solomon's enterprises, the levying of passage tolls on caravans, and taxation of his own population enriched the royal treasury and served as a stimulus to ramified and comprehensive building projects, some of which it seems were planned during David's reign. At the very center of his construction activity stood the complex of royal buildings, consisting of the palace and the Temple in Jerusalem, which was intended to serve as the focal point of religious-cultic life on a national scale, in eclipsing the local cult centers scattered throughout the kingdom. In this fashion Solomon sought to strengthen the relationship of the tribes to Jerusalem and the reigning dynasty. He hoped that the Temple would unite Israel, overcoming the traditional and widespread separatist tendencies.

Many cities in the kingdom were developed and fortified. Some served as bases for the chariotry which was introduced into Israel for the first time (I Kings 10:26; II Chron. 9:25). It appears that economic development was not limited to royal circles. It must have had indirect influence on other elements of the population. There is no doubt that widespread literary developments, known from biblical sources and Jewish tradition, were related to the economic achievements of the monarchy.

For his many activities, royal administration, and the support of the royal household, Solomon relied upon a system of 12 districts, which took shape during his reign, and upon the use of *corvée* that was expanded to include laborers among the Israelite population, whereas David had relied solely on compulsory alien labor. It is apparent, however, that all these measures were insufficient to meet the great need; Solomon was forced to cede certain border cities to Hiram in order to cover his trade deficit (I Kings 9:10-13). For this reason the tax burden began to rise gradually, resulting in the impoverishment of the population and substantial agitation. Along with this, feelings of discrimination began to grow among the northern tribes, especially Ephraim, whose burden was exacerbated by the division of its territory into several administrative districts, while Judah, blatantly favored, remained outside this administrative system. Furthermore, the dissatisfaction of the priests and levites in outlying cultic centers about the treatment accorded to Jerusalem and the Temple contributed to the general malaise which began to make its mark

toward the end of Solomon's reign. Against this background, the abortive rebellion inspired by \*Jeroboam son of Nebat, of Ephraim, who had been administrator of the forced Israelite labor, stood out (I Kings 11:26-40). Another rebellion was attempted in Edom. In addition it appears that toward the end of Solomon's reign the Arameans revolted against Solomon's subjugation of them and reestablished the kingdom of \*Aram-Damascus.

It is therefore evident that the prosperity during Solomon's reign had negative aspects, which were compounded by important factors that existed even before the establishment of the monarchy and rebelliousness whose roots were in the antagonism between the central monarchy and tribal separatist aspirations. These factors overcame the positive aspects of the monarchy until they destroyed the united kingdom.

**Division of the Kingdom; The Earliest Kings.** The internal dissension and rebelliousness did not shake Solomon's throne but broke out in full force after his death. \*Rehoboam, his son, did not enjoy his father's and grandfather's popularity with the people. He was faced with the difficult problem of perpetuating the monarchy in the face of a growing wave of strong demands from the tribes to ease the economic burdens. The leaders of the tribes saw the time as propitious for putting pressure on the new king. Rehoboam's rule was accepted without protest in Judah and Jerusalem, but the king required the assent of the rest of the tribes, which is a clear indication of the seriousness of the state of affairs. Rehoboam was unable to find a suitable way of complying with the demands of the tribes in \*Shechem to ease their burden, without risking his prestige, administrative dislocations, and loss of control. As a result of his refusal, the elders of Israel felt themselves free to sever their ties with Jerusalem, and crowned Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had returned from refuge in Egypt, with the support of certain prophetic circles (see \*Ahijah).

The aims of those who wished to secede from Jerusalem and the Davidic dynasty were realized, but the recognition of the need for a monarchy remained in Israel. The crowning of Jeroboam proves that the elders wanted to perpetuate the monarchy, though separate from and without connection with the dynasty of David. The slogan circulated during the revolt of Sheba son of Bichri was used again: "What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse" (I Kings 12:16).

With the division, there arose two sister kingdoms, hostile to one another. In the south was established a small kingdom, including the territories of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, which appears to have broken its connection with the tribes of Israel even during the period of the united kingdom. Judah controlled Edom and the Shephelah. The kingdom of Israel in the north included all the territories of the remaining tribes, maintaining its rule over Moab and probably over Ammon. Its first capital was Shechem.

Scholars suppose that the division was a causal factor for a change in the nature of the monarchy itself. Judah maintained the continuity of the Davidic dynasty, which had its roots in the tribe of Judah, a factor of decisive importance in the kingdom. In Israel, however, the monarchy was established upon the agreement of a number of tribes and was dependent upon their continued support. It was predictable that intertribal rivalries would necessarily lead to an unstable monarchy, and certainly not to dynastic continuity.

The kingdom of Judah and the House of David did not accept the secession of the tribes. They regarded the move as illegal and sinful, in contradiction to national and religious imperatives. This viewpoint finds expression in biblical \*historiography. It was not, of course, shared by

Jeroboam son of Nebat and the advisors who established the kingdom of Israel. Jeroboam's very first acts were directed toward the establishment of a separate framework, free of all spiritual and political dependence upon Judah and the Davidic dynasty and of any cultic relationship with the Temple in Jerusalem. To this end, he made use of the ancient cultic centers at the ends of his kingdom, \*Beth-El and \*Dan. \*Golden Calves, the base upon which the unseen God of Israel hovered, were placed in them; they were not, as biblical tradition would have it, intended for idol worship. This tradition clearly reflects feelings in Judah toward Jeroboam (see I Kings 12:26-33); northern opposition to the Calves is not recorded before the prophet Hosea (eighth cent.; cf. Hos. 8:5f.; 10:5f.; 13:2). Jeroboam ordained a change in the times for festivals in order to discourage pilgrimages to the Jerusalem Temple (I Kings 12:33). In parallel fashion, he evicted the levites, who had been part of the administration of the united kingdom, to prevent the people's loyalty from turning toward Jerusalem, and appointed others. Despite the negative opinion displayed toward Jeroboam in the Bible, it is becoming increasingly clear that his actions were based on an earlier northern Israelite priestly tradition, not in any way connected with idolatry. His acts also brought about the collapse of the administrative system in Israel, which until that time had been based upon Davidic loyalists. Judah, for its part, refused to regard the division as a *fait accompli*. This was the cause for the frequent wars between the two kingdoms. It appears that at first Judah was the more successful.

Five years after the division an Egyptian military expedition into Palestine was headed by Pharaoh \*Shishak, who had been Solomon's enemy and had given asylum to Jeroboam when he fled after the abortive revolt. The final aim of and pretext for this expedition are the subject of some controversy. According to the data in Shishak's topographical list, the largest Israelite cities were destroyed and razed and the most fertile areas of the Northern Kingdom were damaged. On the other hand, the amount of damage to Judah was much less, either because Shishak was not interested in Judah proper but rather in the Negev and the Aravah, or because Rehoboam had bribed the pharaoh with tributes. In any case, as a result of the Egyptian invasion, Rehoboam began to establish a chain of fortified cities (II Chron. 11:5-12). It is significant that Judah's northern boundaries were not fortified, perhaps because of the hope that continued control over the kingdom of Jeroboam would be possible. Rehoboam's expansionist aims were advanced by his son \*Abijah (911-908 B.C.E.), who had assumed some royal powers during his father's lifetime. He defeated Jeroboam's army and controlled the



Figure 7. The high place discovered at Tell Dan, probably the one built by Jeroboam I (I Kings 12:26-30). Courtesy A. Biran, Israel Department of Antiquities, Jerusalem.

southern part of the hill country of Ephraim (II Chron. 13:13-19). There is reason to suppose that Abijah was in contact with Aram-Damascus, which had grown in strength since its liberation from Israelite rule at the end of Solomon's reign, and concluded a treaty with them directed against Jeroboam. From that point on, Aram-Damascus was a factor in the conflict between the two sister kingdoms and the chief beneficiary of their rivalry.

These frequent defeats undermined Jeroboam's rule, which apparently had not been sufficiently strong since the division. This may be seen from the short reign of his successor \*Nadab (907-906 B.C.E.). When fighting the Philistines—who sought to take from Israel its territory in the lowlands—he had also to deal with a rebellion led by \*Baasha son of Ahijah of the tribe of Issachar. This rebellion brought to an end the dynasty of Jeroboam and the hegemony of the tribe of Ephraim over the northern kingdom. The new king (906-883 B.C.E.) insured himself against Aram-Damascus' intervention and succeeded in recapturing the territories lost during Jeroboam's time, from Judah, which was now ruled by \*Asa (908-867 B.C.E.). Baasha penetrated almost as far as Jerusalem, posing the serious danger of isolation to the capital of Judah. Asa was forced to turn to \*Ben-Hadad I, king of Damascus and succeeded in breaking off the treaty between Ben-Hadad and Baasha, and in provoking the penetration of the Arameans into the northern parts of the kingdom of Israel (I Kings 15:9-22; II Chron. 16:1-5). It is possible that at this time Israel also lost control of Moab. Baasha had to withdraw from Judah in order to protect his own kingdom from Aram. Asa utilized the lull in the fighting to fortify his northern boundary by means of the total conscription of the inhabitants of Judah. Some scholars see in this an abandonment of the hope of annexing Israel, which had been current in Judah since the division.

In Baasha's time, too, there was a diminution of earlier achievements as a result of his defeats. Baasha did succeed to preserve his throne, but with his death, civil war broke out in Israel and a few ministers struggled to obtain the throne. Elah (883-882 B.C.E.) was murdered in a plot instigated by \*Zimri, one of the officers of the army. Zimri was killed by \*Omri, with part of the nation backing \*Tibni son of Ginath. After several years of conflict, Omri succeeded to the throne of Israel.

**Asa, King of Judah, and His Descendants. The Omride Dynasty in Israel.** Whatever hopes there had been during Abijah's successes for reunification under the Davidic dynasty were destroyed by the military failures of Asa against Baasha. Asa was successful, however, in defending the south of Judah from \*Zerah, the Cushite (II Chron. 14:8-14). Though exact identification of Zerah is lacking, and there is no agreement on the exact nature of his forces, it appears that he was acting under Egyptian influence, trying to broaden the Egyptian holdings inside Judah's boundaries which had begun to be established with Shishak's campaign. With the defeat of Zerah and his forces, however, Judah regained the territories it had lost in Rehoboam's time, and even broadened them.

In internal policy Asa's name is connected with the purification of Judah of foreign cults. Idolatry had been current in Palestine as a result of Solomon's marital policy and the international connections of Solomon and Rehoboam. Although it did not strike deep roots among the populace, idolatry had political significance. Idolatrous tendencies seem to have been strengthened in Judah during the regency of Asa's mother (or grandmother), prior to his attaining majority. The purging of the foreign cults, which had become widespread, was connected with the removal of the queen mother from her high office and the reversal of

her policies, which had almost certainly been responsible for the growth of idolatry in Jerusalem. Asa had the support of popular and prophetic circles for his purges. He appears to have lost this support, however, when he allied himself with the king of Aram-Damascus, and according to II Chronicles 16:7-10 he was even engaged in the oppression of his own people.

The accession of Omri to the throne put a halt to the collapse of the central government in Israel which began as a result of the riots after Elah's death. Omri took decisive steps to stabilize the kingdom, such as the construction of the new capital in \*Samaria. Like Jerusalem, this city became the king's personal landholding. It appears that Omri was subject to Aramean pressures, as is seen by the fact that Aramean commercial agencies (*huṣṣot*) were located in Samaria and had special privileges (I Kings 20:34). At a later stage, Omri succeeded in establishing an independent foreign policy, concluding a treaty with Ethbaal, king of Sidon. This, like the treaties of David and Solomon, opened the Phoenician markets to Israel's agricultural products, and made it possible to import essential goods and luxury products for Omri's kingdom. This treaty may have been intended as a stabilizing factor against the political aspirations of Aram-Damascus. The ties with Ethbaal were strengthened by the marriage of Israel's heir apparent to Ethbaal's daughter. Israel's main contribution to the alliance was control of the heights of Moab, in the territory north of the Arnon, whose conquest by Omri is attested by the \*Mesha stele. The conquest enabled him to control and direct the products carried over the "King's Highway." It may be assumed that the efforts made by the king of Israel to improve relations with the kingdom of Judah were made out of his desire to establish an anti-Aramean alliance on the one hand, and to get Judah to join the Tyre-Samaritan axis on the other. Judah's joining the axis was important, because of the Judahite control of the southern part of the "King's Highway," which passed through Edom, a land subject to it. In Omri's time Israel had become an important political factor. The stability and prosperity began to be felt when \*Ahab son of Omri started his reign; he added to the achievements of his father. Despite this, Ahab is negatively evaluated in the biblical historiography due to his toleration of the expansion of Phoenician culture in his personal and royal affairs. The Tyrean cult began to gain popularity among Israel's upper classes—the officers and merchants—due to the close ties with Tyre, and especially because of the activities of \*Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, and her followers (I Kings 16:32-33). The attitude of the biblical historiographer toward Ahab reflects that of circles close to Elijah.



Figure 8. Fragment of carved ivory panel depicting the Egyptian god Ptah, from King Ahab's "ivory house" in Samaria, first half of ninth century B.C.E. Jerusalem, Rockefeller Museum, Israel Department of Antiquities.

Elijah attacked the king, Jezebel, and the Baal prophets, who had attained a foothold in Israel (I Kings 18:18-45). Elijah enjoyed wide support among the populace, which bitterly resented the penetration of foreign cults and indeed suffered because of the innovations brought about by the Phoenician way of life (see also \*Naboth).

The biblical view, however, does not negate the positive aspects of Ahab as a ruler. During his time solidarity between Judah and Israel increased, strengthened by political marriages. There appears to have been a treaty between the two nations, which placed both on an equal footing. In addition, Ahab enjoyed considerable success in his battles against Assyria and Aram-Damascus; these battles had taken on considerable importance by the end of his reign. It appears that Aram's intention was to destroy the Israel-Judah alliance, which was directed against it. Furthermore, the rule of Jerusalem and Samaria in Transjordan bothered the ruler of Damascus, \*Ben-Hadad II. The unchanged economic interests of Aram made it necessary to hold the territory east of the Jordan as an economic hinterland for its caravan routes and agricultural products. At first the Aramean army tried to subjugate Israel by a quick campaign, which ended with its defeat at the gates of Samaria. The next battle took place at Aphek and also ended in a clear-cut victory for Israel. It is instructive that despite the Aramean defeat Ahab entered into a treaty with Ben-Hadad, whose terms were especially lenient: certain cities were returned to Israel and she received commercial concessions in Damascus. This desire to make peace with Aram without hurting her too much is criticized by the prophets. It is clear, however, that this desire resulted from political and military considerations connected with the events outside the borders of Aram and Israel, namely, the methodical penetration by \*Shalmaneser III, king of Assyria, into Syria, which posed a concrete danger for the states in that area. These states came to the realization that Assyria had to be fought by an alliance of powers, and Ahab was no doubt party to this feeling. For this reason Ahab did not want to harm Aram's power to fight against the common enemy. One of Shalmaneser's inscriptions, in which the Assyrian king claims a victory over a coalition of kings of Syria and Palestine near Karkar (853 B.C.E.), prominently mentions "Ahab the Israelite" alongside the kings of Damascus and Hamath. Ahab came to the battle, according to this inscription, with a force of 2,000 chariots—the largest contributed by any of the allies; besides, he supplied 10,000 infantry. This is evidence not only of his political-military standing but also of the economic strength of the kingdom which could sustain such a force. Especially instructive is the find of Ahab's stables at Megiddo. To this may be added other archaeological evidence which testifies to the great development of Israelite cities, including the capital, in that period. The existence of an "ivory house," which is known from the Bible (I Kings 22:39), is confirmed by ivory plaques found in Samaria. Among the cities he refortified, according to the Bible, was Jericho. The fortification of this city appears to be connected with the increased control of Moab, north of the Arnon, over which Israel ruled. There too, according to the Mesha stele, widespread fortification activity took place. During the battle with Assyria, or shortly thereafter, Mesha revolted against Ahab, and began to eradicate Israel's rule in Moab. He may have been encouraged by Aram-Damascus, which resumed its thrusts against Israel after the battle at Karkar, at which the allies, at least temporarily, were able to stop the advance of Shalmaneser III into central Syria. (Another theory holds that Mesha revolted during the reign of Ahab's successor.) The renewed battle between Aram and Israel took place near Ramoth-Gilead, which

appears to have been an area contested by the two sides. This time, Judah allied itself with Israel. The battle ended in the death of Ahab and the disengagement of forces following the king's death. It appears that the Arameans were unable to cross Israel's border in Transjordan, which means that the battle did not end in Israel's defeat.

Ahab's reign was a period in which Israel came to be a considerable force in the international affairs of the region; this resulted from her prudent policies and her highly developed military capabilities, which gave her an advantage over Aram. The great building and fortification activities reflect advanced economic development in the kingdom, as well as its stability which remained unbroken in Ahab's time despite the internal struggle against foreign religious and cultural influences. Attention should be drawn to the political, economic, and military ties that existed between Samaria and Jerusalem, which was ruled by \*Jehoshaphat son of Asa (c. 870-846 B.C.E.). As a result of this alliance, which was strengthened by a treaty, Judah enjoyed a relatively long period of peace. Jehoshaphat exploited these conditions by attempting a renewal of Red Sea commerce, which appears to have been interrupted after the death of Solomon. There is no doubt that Judah also received Phoenician technical support in this matter. The fleet which was built, however, sank before it could sail. The assertion of authority over Philistia and the Arabian tribes must be understood in the framework of the attempts to reestablish Judah as a commercial power (II Chron. 17:11). The rule of Edom was carried out by Jehoshaphat with the help of a governor, and at a later period by a vassal king. Because of Edom, Jehoshaphat feared a deep Aramean penetration into Transjordan which would have endangered his bases there. This is probably one of the reasons for the treaty with Ahab and the joining of the forces of Judah to those of Israel in the battle at Ramoth-Gilead. (One opinion holds that Judah also joined Israelite forces during the battle with Assyria at Karkar in 853 B.C.E. This would account for the high number of chariots of Ahab.)

Jehoshaphat devoted much attention to internal policy. He appears to have been the first king of Judah to establish firm foundations for the royal and administrative offices which had been undermined since the division of the kingdoms, because of the frequent warfare of his predecessors. During the earliest part of his reign he sent officers and levites into the Judean cities to teach the people the Law (II Chron. 17:7). This was probably connected with a reorganization of the judicial institutions in the provincial towns and the establishment of a supreme court in Jerusalem (II Chron. 17:7-9; 19:5ff.), run jointly by administrative personnel, the priesthood, and the national leadership. He divided Judah into administrative districts (II Chron. 17:2); one opinion holding that this division is preserved in Joshua 15. Jehoshaphat reorganized the regular army and the reserve forces and expanded the system of fortified cities and fortresses (II Chron. 17:13-19).

The cordial relations between Judah and Israel worsened during the short reign of \*Ahaziah son of Ahab (852/1-851/0 B.C.E.), who wished to be included in Judah's commercial sea enterprises but was refused (I Kings 22:49-50). With the accession of his brother \*Jehoram (851/0-842 B.C.E.) to Israel's throne, the friendly relations were resumed. Jehoshaphat even participated in an ill-fated campaign of Israel which was intended to reestablish Jehoram's authority over Mesha (II Kings 3:4-24). Following this, Edom broke free of Judah, whose borders were then breached by Moabite and Ammonite bands, and whose country was penetrated by nomadic tribes. Judah

was saved as a result of quarrels among the invaders (II Chron. 20:23-24).

The early part of the reign of Jehoshaphat's son \*Jehoram (c. 851-843 B.C.E.) was marred by internal upheavals, as attested by the murder of his brothers and certain high officials by Jehoram himself. It may be that the defeats at the end of Jehoshaphat's reign were responsible for the agitation which became even greater by the loss of Edom and the economic benefits Edom had provided (II Kings 8:20ff.; II Chron. 21:8). Added to all of this was no doubt dissatisfaction with the activities of the king's wife, \*Athaliah daughter of Ahab, who had been accustomed to Phoenician cultic practices in her home and worked at introducing into Judah these practices as well as the mode of life customary in the court of Israel. She may also have sought to increase Judah's dependence on Israel. There is reason to believe that the king of Israel and Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat combined their forces in a renewed treaty of the Syrian kings against Shalmaneser III. During the absence of Judah's army, the country was defenseless against an invasion by Philistines, Arabian tribes, and Cushites who reached Jerusalem, capturing all the royal family except for Ahaziah. The latter reigned after his father's death (843-842 B.C.E.), influenced by his mother Athaliah. He continued the policies set by his father, even joining Jehoram son of Ahab in a war against Aram at Ramoth-Gilead. During this period Ahab's son Jehoram reaped the fruits of dissatisfaction with the house of Omri. This opposition gathered strength as a result of Jehoram's failures on the field of battle. The king appears to have understood the dangers of popular opposition growing along religious lines and out of social tensions. The opposition pointed to royal circles as the source of evil. Jehoram tried to remove the stigma of Phoenician influence and attempted to appease the people, but he was too late to have any significant success. Perhaps he did not discern how widespread the dissatisfaction was. He was wounded during the renewal of the battle against Aram at Ramoth-Gilead. During his convalescence at Jezreel he was killed, when \*Jehu called for reprisals against the house of Omri. On this same dramatic occasion Ahaziah of Judah was wounded and died.

**The Dynasty of Jehu in Israel. Athaliah and Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jotham, Kings of Judah.** Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi (842-814 B.C.E.) was an army officer stationed in Gilead. He was swept aloft by the wave of popular rebellion, supported by the army, circles of prophets, and dissatisfied elements among the populace. With great cruelty, he killed the royal family and its courtiers, settling the long-standing debt against Jezebel. He decisively cut off every trace of the Baal worship, killing followers of the cult. Thus, he fulfilled the wishes of his supporters, but did not consider that in so doing he had also destroyed the political and economic bases of his kingdom by cutting, with one blow, the ties of Samaria with Phoenicia and Judah and upsetting the internal organization of his kingdom and its military capabilities. Jehu was thus open to the pressures of Aram-Damascus, which at this time was ruled by a new and powerful king, \*Hazael. In an effort to insure his own rule, Jehu quickly made himself submissive to the Assyrian Shalmaneser III, who reached Damascus in 841. Thus, for a short period of time Israel enjoyed a relaxation of pressures from the Arameans, who were busy defending themselves against Assyria. At a later stage, after Shalmaneser had failed to subjugate the capital of Aram, Hazael conquered the Israelite territories in eastern Transjordan. Toward the end of his reign, Jehu suffered another defeat when the Aramean army marched through Israel and reached the borders of Judah.

When Ahaziah died, his mother Athaliah grasped the reins of leadership in Judah by killing the royal family (II Kings 11:1; II Chron. 22:10). It is evident that she did not enjoy much popular support, since even before murdering the king's family she had been resented. There is no doubt that the revolution of Jehu in Samaria had its reverberations in Jerusalem, where the very way of life and practices which had been rooted out of Israel continued to be observed. It is of little wonder that a minor revolt took place in the Judahite capital, led by the Temple staff and supported by the army and leaders of the people. Athaliah paid with her life and \*Joash son of Ahaziah (836-798 B.C.E.), the only one to have escaped death at the hands of his grandmother, was made king of Judah. His coronation was accompanied by a covenant made between God and the king and the nation, and between the king and the people. These covenants stressed loyalty to the God of Israel and the renewed continuity of the Davidic dynasty in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem priesthood gained significant influence in political affairs thanks to \*Jehoiada the priest, who had been the instigator of the rebellion. The Temple was restored to its former glory: it was repaired by means of contributions solicited from the nation. That same year Hazael, king of Aram, reached Judah after having defeated Jehu. Joash was forced to pay a heavy tribute, which was taken from the Temple treasury (II Kings 12:18-19; II Chron. 24:23) in order to put off the destruction threatening his country. It may be that this act was interpreted as a blow to the Temple, thereby opening a wedge for activities against the king. With the death of Jehoiada the priest a struggle broke out between the priesthood and the secular administration, which aspired to positions of power in the court. The secular administration won in this struggle, though it appears that the priesthood did not accept the loss of its special status, which had been gained after the revolt that put Joash on the throne. Against the king, who now supported the newly-risen secular power, a conspiracy arose which resulted in Joash's assassination. This lack of stability continued during the reign of \*Amaziah son of Joash. The new king sought to allay tensions by not touching the descendants of his father's murderers, though he did revenge himself against the murderers themselves. It appears that he was able to quiet the circles which had formed the conspiracy, because the biblical sources speak of the conscription and organization of the army in Judah (II Chron. 25:5) to fight in Edom. This would have been impossible during a period of internal disturbances. For this purpose he engaged a troop of mercenaries from Israel, but not wanting to arouse new internal resistance, Amaziah gave up the mercenary force from Israel and fought Edom by his own means. It appears that he was unable to conquer the whole of Edom. At a later date, for reasons not sufficiently clear, he turned against Israel. Amaziah was defeated by Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, the king of Israel, who entered Jerusalem, destroyed parts of her walls, looted the Temple and palace treasures, imposed economic sanctions, and took hostages away with him (II Kings 14:8-14; II Chron. 25:17-24). Amaziah became a vassal of Israel. This appears to have led to rebellion against his rule and his eventual assassination.

The defeats of Jehu led to the loss of territory and power by the kingdom of Israel. The period of decline continued during the reign of \*Jehoahaz son of Jehu (817-800 B.C.E.). Echoes of this appear in the cycle of narratives about Elisha (II Kings 5-7). At the same time, Aramean pressures reached their peak, as a result of which the kingdom of Israel was forced to contract into the nearby environs of Samaria. Some slight relief from Aramean bondage was provided when Adad-nirari III, king of Assyria, conducted



a campaign into Syria against Aram and Damascus its capital, failing however to defeat her. He appears to be the *moshî'a*, "deliverer," who, according to the biblical sources, saved Israel from Aram (II Kings 13:5). It is possible that Jehoahaz was subjugated by the Assyrian king, paying him, like Jehu before him, a levy during the time he was in the vicinity of Damascus. An Assyrian inscription mentions "the land of Omri" (an appellation for the kingdom of Israel even after the end of the Omri dynasty), among the lands subject to Adad-nirari III. It appears that during the latter years of Jehoahaz, Israel began to break free of the firm hand of Damascus, which was busy defending itself against Assyria. A recently discovered stela mentions Jehoash (Joash) son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel (800-784 B.C.E.), among those subjugated by Adad-nirari III. It may be that this subjugation was a continuation of the tactics of his father (if indeed the sources mentioned above refer to the time of his father and not to Jehoash's period), or he may have surrendered after the campaign of the king of Assyria into the valley of Lebanon in 796 B.C.E. In any case Jehoash utilized the decline of Aram to recapture territories taken from Israel during the reigns of his predecessors (II Kings 13:9-14). He also stopped incursions by Moabite marauders (13:20). This is yet another indication of Israel's renewed military capability, which also displayed itself in Jehoash's war against Amaziah, king of Judah, in which he defeated Amaziah's armies and reached Jerusalem.

A protracted period of nonintervention on the part of Assyria in Syrian affairs, which occurred after Jehoash's time, had a positive influence upon the policies of the region's countries, including Israel and Judah. Furthermore, these two countries began to assume prime importance in filling the political vacuum left in the wake of Aram's decline following her war with Assyria. Thus, the period of \*Jeroboam son of Jehoash (789-748 B.C.E.) was one of ascendancy for Israel. Some of his political and military achievements are briefly described in II Kings 14:23-29. These sources indicate that Jeroboam held widespread territories, including Aram-Damascus and eastern Transjordan. His northern boundary reached the kingdom of Hamath, as in the days of David. The political and military activities were accompanied by economic expansion and building and fortification work in Samaria and its environs. Hints in the Books of Chronicles and Amos lead one to believe that Jeroboam initiated and strove to establish broader settlement areas in Transjordan and gave large pieces of land to his officers and followers. These individuals eventually developed into large and wealthy owners of estates of commanding influence, playing substantial roles in the final days of the kingdom of Israel. There were good relations at this time between Israel and Judah, as evidenced by a mention of a joint census in Transjordan (I Chron. 5:16-17).

Judah, too, enjoyed a stability which flowed from the convenient international situation. From the time of Joash the rule of Judah's kings was disturbed by incessant internal struggles and an inability to gather sufficient support to overcome the opposition to their rule. The reign of Jeroboam's contemporary, \*Uzziah (Azariah) son of Amaziah (785-733 B.C.E.), was one of the most flourishing in the history of the kingdom of Judah. In the absence of external disturbances Uzziah completed the conquest of Edom, including the important bay of Elath and its harbor (II Kings 14:22; II Chron. 26:2). He subjugated the Arabian tribes who lived at the borders of his kingdom, and asserted his authority over Philistia, including Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod (II Chron. 26:6-7). He strengthened his sovereignty over these areas by means of a far-flung

building campaign and expanded agriculture and pasturing operations in eastern Transjordan to meet the needs of the royal economy. A similar development was accomplished in the Negev and the Arabah, including operations to ensure water supply, settlements, and a chain of fortifications for communications and defense (26:10ff.). The army of Judah was reorganized and supplied with new weapons (26:11-15); special attention was given to the fortification of Jerusalem. These biblical data are probably connected with the anti-Assyrian war preparations which occupied the region due to the penetration of \*Tiglath-Pileser III into Syria. It is likely that the "Azriau from the land of Yaûdi," mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions as the leader of a group of allies who fought the armies of Assyria in northern Syria and were defeated in 738, is in fact Uzziah, the king of Judah. The question of how Uzziah became head of the alliance which fought in northern Syria is a difficult one. It is almost certain that Judah replaced Israel in importance in the area after Israel's precipitous decline following the death of Jeroboam son of Jehoash.

The Bible attributes Uzziah's leprosy to his attempts to secure special privileges for himself in the Temple service (II Chron. 26:16-21). The incident is not sufficiently explicit, but it is clear that the king's cultic activities were rejected by the priesthood. There may even be in the conflict between Uzziah and the priests a continuation of the struggles that existed between the Temple staff and his father and grandfather. Biblical sources and chronological calculations (see also \*Chronology) lead to the conclusion that as a result of Uzziah's infirmity his son \*Jotham (758-743 B.C.E.) took part in the administration of the kingdom. Furthermore, Jotham's regency, though counted in the Bible as a separate rule, is included in the years attributed to Uzziah, who was still alive. It even appears that the years given as Uzziah's period of rule include a few years from the reign of Ahaz, his grandson. Jotham son of Uzziah acted according to the guidance and direction of his father. It is not unreasonable to assume that a good portion of the building and other activities ascribed to the father was actually accomplished by the son. In the light of what has been said above, it is difficult to distinguish between their reigns. In any case, he appears to have appeased the priesthood. He, too, is credited with the fortification of Jerusalem and cities of Judah and with the building of fortresses. In his time Ammon was brought under Judah's rule (II Chron. 27:5). It appears that as a result of this victory he was able to enlist the aid of Jeroboam son of Jehoash in the campaign into Transjordan (see above). After the defeat of 738, in which Judah was not directly affected, Jotham attempted accommodation with Assyria, thus arousing the ire of \*Rezin, king of Damascus. The latter had restored independence to Aram with the help of his ally the king of Israel. These two kings attempted to involve Judah in a new anti-Assyrian campaign.

**The Last Days of Samaria. The Kingdom of Judah Until its Destruction.** With the death of Jeroboam son of Jehoash chaos broke out in Israel. Influential in the upheavals characteristic of this period were the great landowners and prominent parties from the eastern side of the Jordan. The short reign of \*Zechariah son of Jeroboam (748/7 B.C.E.) ended in his assassination at the hands of \*Shallum son of Jabesh (i.e., from Jabesh-Gilead). Shallum was deposed, before he could ascend the throne, by \*Menahem son of Gadi (747/6-737/6 B.C.E.), who also appears to have been from Transjordan. He seems to have attempted to expand his territories and establish a firm rule (II Kings 15:16), but the iron hand of Tiglath-Pileser III prevented him from achieving his aims. There is no doubt that Menahem son of Gadi is "Menahem of Samaria," who is referred to in an



Figure 9. Part of the Siloam tunnel constructed by King Hezekiah c. 701 B.C.E. to bring water from the Gihon stream into Jerusalem in case of siege. Photo Werner Braun, Jerusalem.

Assyrian inscription of 738 B.C.E. as one of those who paid taxes to the king of Assyria. It may be assumed that after the defeat of Azariah-Uzziah in northern Syria, Menahem was quick to be counted among those loyal to Tiglath-Pileser III. Biblical sources describe Menahem as having been forced to pay a heavy tax to Pul (i.e., Tiglath-Pileser), the king of Assyria. This money was exacted from the wealthy landowners of Menahem's kingdom (II Kings 15:19-20). One theory based on the Samaria ostraca holds that the tax was collected in the form of agricultural products. After the death of Menahem, \*Pekahiah, his son, lost control of affairs and soon fell in a conspiracy led by \*Pekah son of Remaliah (735/4-733/2 B.C.E.), one of the nobles of Gilead. The cause of the conspiracy seems to have been dissatisfaction on the part of Transjordanian Israelites with Assyrian domination of Israel; these parties cultivated their own connections with Aram. Thus, when Pekah began his reign, he entered into a treaty with Rezin, king of Damascus, which was aimed against Tiglath-Pileser III. In order to create a secure flank these two attempted to compel Jotham, and later his son \*Ahaz (743-727 B.C.E.), to abandon Judah's policy of submitting to Assyria. They attempted this by fomenting rebellion in Edom and inciting Philistia (II Kings 16:6; II Chron. 28:17-18), and by a military campaign toward Jerusalem which was intended to upset the Davidic dynasty. Ahaz therefore turned to Tiglath-Pi-

leser III for aid, and, according to the biblical sources, submitted to the king of Assyria. He is blamed too for introducing alien cult usages into Jerusalem, a sign of the growing foreign influences upon Judah (II Kings 16:3-4, 10-18; II Chron. 28:3-4, 21-25). It is not clear whether the appearance of Tiglath-Pileser in Damascus resulted from Ahaz's request, since it is highly unlikely that the king of Assyria would have responded to such a call if he had not already decided to attack Damascus anyway. What appears more likely is that Ahaz turned to Tiglath-Pileser in 734, while the Assyrian army was already engaged in campaign along the Phoenician coastline, reaching as far as the "brook of Egypt" (Wadi El-Arish). This Assyrian venture was intended to strengthen control over the Philistinian coastal cities, and especially over Gaza. Thus Ahaz's request must have fallen upon receptive ears, since it suited Tiglath-Pileser's political-military plans. In 733-732 the Assyrians besieged Damascus and captured it, making it a center of an Assyrian province. During the siege Tiglath-Pileser also conquered portions of eastern Transjordan and penetrated Galilee and the Valley of Beth-Netuphah. As it appears from Assyrian sources and biblical references (II Kings 15:29), he may have reached as far as Ashkelon. Immediately following these events another revolt took place in Samaria. In place of the cruel and destructive Pekah son of Remaliah, who brought disaster to the

kingdom, \*Hoshea son of Elah (733/2-724/3 B.C.E.) became king, his position being confirmed by the Assyrian ruler.

Throughout this period Judah maintained its vassal status, thus being saved. Assyrian records tell about Ahaz (called Jehoahaz in the inscription) who paid a tax in 728 B.C.E.

With the death of Tiglath-Pileser III widespread revolt broke out in Syria and Palestine. Even the kingdom of Israel, encouraged by Egypt (II Kings 17:4), joined in the revolt. The new Assyrian king, \*Shalmaneser V, punished the rebels by means of a military campaign. Upon reaching Palestine, he besieged Samaria for three years, and the capital fell in 722 B.C.E. The exile of its inhabitants and the turning of Samaria into an Assyrian province was completed by the next Assyrian king, Sargon II (II Kings 17:6; cf. 18:9-11; see \*Exile, Assyrian). He appears to have rushed his army westward in 720 to suppress rebellion in many parts of the area. Judah refrained from participation in this uprising. Assyrian inscriptions from Sargon's time mention Judah's submission. Still, there are hints about the involvement of \*Hezekiah son of Ahaz (727-698 B.C.E.) in support of Ashdod, which was in rebellion against Assyria. As a result of this, sections of Judah's western border were attacked. In any case, Judah enjoyed a period of relative quiet, possibly because of its submission to Assyria. However, as soon as the Assyrian danger had passed, Hezekiah adopted a series of measures which may be interpreted as a shift in policy. The purification of the cult from foreign and popular elements (II Chron. 28:24; 29:3) was intended to raise national morale and unite the people around the House of David and the Temple. Even the literary activity (Prov. 25:1) was an expression of a new nationalistic spirit which, like the purification of the cult, expressed aspirations of political independence. There were even attempts to bring closer to Judah those residents of the former Israel living in nearby Assyrian provinces which had been established on the territories of the former kingdom of Israel. To this end, Hezekiah sent envoys to invite these people to participate in the Passover festival in Jerusalem, the date of which was made to conform to the calendar kept in the north (II Chron. 30:1-21). It is clear that these aspirations were bound to become involved with anti-Assyrian activities which were growing from Egypt to Babylonia. The mission of the Assyrian \*Merodach-Baladan (II Kings 20:12; Isa. 39) to Jerusalem was intended to clarify Judah's stand in these activities. With the death of Sargon II the balance seems to have been tipped in favor of Hezekiah's participation in the anti-Assyrian front. Jerusalem prepared for revolt. The capital was fortified, and the \*Siloam tunnel was built to bring the water of the Gihon within her walls in time of emergency. The army was reorganized in preparation for the revolt. It appears from Assyrian inscriptions that at this time the pro-Assyrian king of Ekron was imprisoned in Jerusalem, and Philistia was attacked (II Kings 18:8). This was done by Judah to create territorial continuity with Ashkelon, also a participant in the revolt.

\*Sennacherib, who succeeded Sargon II, successfully fought Babylonia, and attempted to conquer the cities along the Phoenician coast, afterward making his way toward Palestine. During this campaign, according to the sources describing his acts in Palestine, the Assyrian king conquered Beth-Dagon, Jaffa, Bene-Berak, and cities of the kingdom of Ashkelon. At Eltekeh, at the approaches to Judah, he defeated the Egyptian relief force which had been sent to help Hezekiah. The Assyrian army entered Judah, destroyed its cities, distributing them among the Philistine kings, and exiled many of the people. A siege was laid upon

Jerusalem. Hezekiah, encouraged by \*Isaiah the prophet who had high standing in the king's court, did not open the gates of the city to Sennacherib, though he did send him a heavy tribute. The subsequent activities of Sennacherib are not clear. He left Judah, though opinions are divided as to his reasons. He may have returned to Palestine at a later date. In any case, Hezekiah remained on his throne as an Assyrian vassal.

This subjugation to Assyria continued during the reign of \*Manasseh son of Hezekiah (698-642 B.C.E.), who reigned during the rule of the last great Assyrian kings. He introduced a host of pagan cults into Jerusalem and Judah (II Kings 21:1-9; II Chron. 33:2-9), continuing a policy established by his father toward the end of his reign. He also paid taxes to Assyria. A late source (II Chron. 33:11-13) relates that Manasseh was taken captive in chains to Babylonia, though he later returned to reign over Judah. The implication is that Manasseh must have taken part in an anti-Assyrian rebellion in another area of the Fertile Crescent. Evidently for political reasons involving imperial interests the Assyrians returned him to the throne. It is said that when he returned to Judah, he rooted out idolatrous practices and fortified Jerusalem and other cities (II Chron. 33:14-16). Again, these acts should be seen in the context of rebellion against Assyria, which resulted from upheavals in the empire at this time.

The reign of \*Amon son of Manasseh was short-lived, ending in his assassination. One theory holds that the murder was connected with an internal struggle over the political orientation of Judah. Amon was killed because of his pro-Assyrian stance, just at a time when the Mesopotamian power was beginning to display signs of weakness. \*Josiah son of Amon (639-609 B.C.E.) was brought to the throne by forces loyal to the House of David. They had before them the example of Hezekiah who had tried to unite the nation and deepen its national and religious awareness by purifying the cult and repairing the Temple. As in former times, the usual political motivation behind these acts existed. In this case the motivation was the decline of Assyria during the time of Josiah. While in earlier times Assyrian declines may have been temporary, however, it was clear during Josiah's reign that the fall of Assyria was not just a passing phenomenon. The Books of Kings and II Chronicles are at odds over the order of events and their times. It appears that II Chronicles is the more dependable, since its chronology and time fit in with the stages of the decline of the Assyrian empire (II Chron. 34-35).

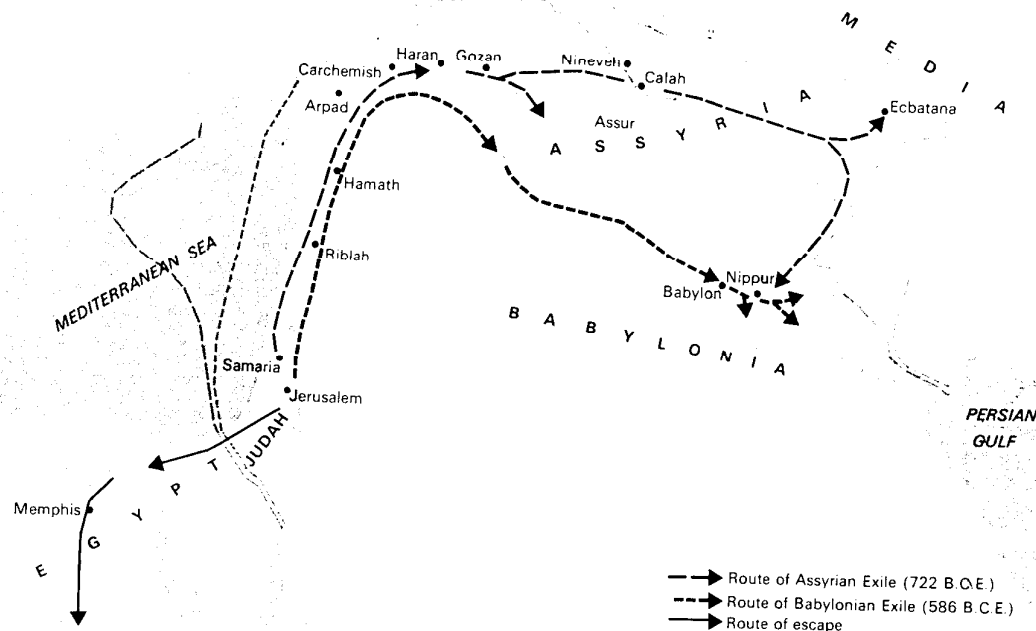
Josiah began by showing his faith in the God of David; he then cleansed his capital and cities and some of the former Israel territories of idolatry; and he finally arranged repairs of the Temple. This last deed is connected with other actions whose purpose was religious reform and the raising of national morale. These included the finding of a Torah scroll, the forming of a new covenant between the nation and its God, and the celebration of the Passover in the capital. The biblical sources indicate that along with the national and spiritual activities of Josiah, there was also a territorial expansion into those Assyrian provinces which were on the soil of the former kingdom of Israel. This explains the appearance of Josiah in Megiddo, where he tried to stop the forces of the pharaoh \*Neco. The latter had attempted to help the tottering Assyrian forces which had fortified themselves along the Euphrates against the advances of Nabopolassar, the Chaldean, who was the founder of the neo-Babylonian empire. Neco wanted to exploit the decline of Assyria to acquire its territories west of the Euphrates. At the battle of Megiddo the army of Judah was defeated and Josiah was mortally wounded. His

attempt to stop Egypt before it reached the Euphrates made Josiah a potential ally of Babylonia. Josiah's political judgment was farseeing, flowing as it did from the hope that Babylonia would be the key rising power in the Fertile Crescent. With the death of Josiah, Judah's last period of national prosperity came to an end. After him came a period of decline, wars, bloodshed, and destruction. \*Jehoahaz, his son, reigned in his stead, but was shortly removed by Neco, who made the areas west of the Euphrates his sphere of influence. Jehoahaz was replaced by \*Jehoiakim (608-598 B.C.E.), Josiah's eldest son, who almost certainly must have displayed more loyalty to Egypt than his deposed brother. Judah became an Egyptian satellite, and was forced to pay heavy tributes (II Kings 24:33).

Beginning with Jehoiakim, Judah was buffeted by the severe conflict between Babylonia and Egypt on the one hand, and the proliferation of conflicting political views among its own ruling classes and people on the other. With \*Nebuchadnezzar's defeat of Neco (605 B.C.E.) and penetration into Philistia, some of Judah's population was exiled to Babylonia. It is even possible that a Babylonian army reached Jerusalem in 603. As a result, Jehoiakim was subject to Babylonian rule for a few years, though at the same time he tried to maintain his connections with Egypt, which encouraged him and promised aid. When Egypt enjoyed some temporary success in stopping Nebuchadnezzar, Jehoiakim's connections with Egypt turned into full-scale rebellion against Babylonia. Throughout this period the prophet \*Jeremiah counseled against a Judah-Egypt alliance, advising that the only way to save Judah from destruction was surrender to Babylonia. Promised Egyptian aid never reached Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar attacked using his forces and soldiers from countries he had

conquered (II Kings 24:2). Jerusalem was placed under siege at around that time and Jehoiakim died during the attack. His son \*Jehoiachin was exiled to Babylonia (597), along with his court, army officers, and craftsmen. Babylonian and other documents make it clear that he was well treated in exile, even retaining his royal title.

Nebuchadnezzar appointed as king of Judah \*Zedekiah son of Josiah (596-586 B.C.E.), who was at first loyal to Babylonia. At a later period he made connections with anti-Babylonian elements and joined a rebellion which encompassed Palestine, the Phoenician coast, and Transjordan. This revolt had the active support of Egypt, now ruled by Pharaoh Hophra. Zedekiah remained loyal to the rebellion even after some of the rebels surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar. He even resisted the pressures of prophets led by Jeremiah, as well as of some of his courtiers, who feared the fate Judah might suffer because of its rebellious activities against Babylonia. The \*Lachish ostraca testify to the events of those days, when the Babylonian army stood at the gateway to the country. These ostraca reflect the internal confusion among the administrators, army, and courtiers, and illustrate the emergency situation within Judah. The Babylonian army penetrated the land and began to destroy its fortifications (589). It appears that an Egyptian force was rushed to Judah at that time, providing some temporary relief from the siege of Jerusalem, but the force was defeated. The capital then came under protracted siege until it was conquered and destroyed, along with the Temple. Zedekiah was captured while trying to escape and was severely punished. Judah was depopulated by the exile of her populace and by the flight of refugees to neighboring countries. Nor was she able to stop the Philistines, Edomites, and Arabian tribes from taking parts of her territories. The remnants of the population of Jerusalem



Map 1. The Assyrian and Babylonian exiles. From J. Shapiro (ed.), *Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, Tel Aviv, 1966.

and Judah concentrated themselves about Mizpeh. There \*Gedaliah son of Ahikam was appointed by the Babylonians to govern the remaining inhabitants of Judah. He was murdered, however, by conspirators from among Judah's former officialdom, who were encouraged by outside forces. With his death, the end came for the last vestige of independence that yet remained. The territory of Judah became an administrative unit of Babylon, with no Jewish representatives, and was no longer a Jewish center.

It appears that in 582 an additional exile of Judahite population took place, further evidence that the Judahites had been part of the rebellion which encompassed the area at that time. The destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the kingdom of Judah brought to an end the long period of independence and sovereignty which the people of Israel had enjoyed. There remained only the deep impress of this period upon the history of the nation and the hopes it gave to future generations.

#### SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF ANCIENT ISRAEL

**The Source.** The only source of information on Israelite society in ancient times is the Bible. Archaeological excavations have so far produced no significant additional material on this subject; nor have the few epigraphical sources of that period which have been discovered in Palestine added to our knowledge in this field. The information gleaned from the Bible is fragmentary, discontinuous, and sketchy. Moreover, it is difficult to obtain a general picture on the basis of biblical material, since this material was mostly written at a much later date than the period it describes, even though it may have contained ancient traditions. The realistic aspects of society and social problems were of incidental interest to the authors and editors, who were preoccupied with questions of morality and social justice. Thus it is only indirectly that the Bible permits us to view the social structure and its component parts, the social concepts and customs, of the ancient era.

**Methods.** Owing to the nature of the unique source, the student of ancient Israelite society must rely chiefly upon typological comparisons with other societies bearing a chronological, ethnic, geographic, and linguistic relationship to ancient Israelite society, as well as with later societies having the same social structure. Such a study will range from the tribal organization of pre-Islamic Arabia to that of Bedouin tribes in the 19th century. The analysis of ancient or recent parallels is guided by the fragmentary information provided in the Bible, which reflects a very well defined social system and way of life.

**Hebrew Society Prior to the Conquest of Canaan.** The information derived from the Bible and by analogy from relevant examples (most particularly from the archive tablets found in the Mesopotamian city of \*Mari, which contain important details about Western Semitic tribal organization), indicates that in the pre-Canaanite period the structure of the Hebrew tribes was patriarchal and their way of life nomadic or seminomadic. Tribal structure was made up of variously sized units which were related to one another by blood, claimed descent from the same patriarchal ancestor, and shared a religious-cultic tradition. During that period it appears that the Patriarchs were a minor element amid the various West Semitic groups which dominated the Fertile Crescent from the second half of the third millennium B.C.E.—especially during the first half of the second millennium B.C.E.—which saw them spread into the Syrian-Israelite region.

**The Period of Settlement in the Land of Israel.** Most of the evidence concerning the tribal structure of Israel relates to the period of the settlement in the Promised Land and thereafter. There is no unequivocal material concerning the

time and nature of the formation of the tribes. The 12 tribes, as we know them from the Bible, are merely a schematic device, a fixed number whose components apparently changed in the course of time, as may be concluded from certain sparse but unmistakable references. Some of these component parts probably dated from pre-settlement days, whereas others were apparently the product of the conquest and the settlement itself. According to one theory, the duodecimal scheme was based upon an actual supra-tribal organization similar to the Greek and Etruscan amphictyonies. Another theory emphasizes the "democratic" rather than ritualistic nature of the organization. Other scholars question the existence of any supra-tribal organization. It seems obvious, however, that whatever its nature, such an organization undoubtedly did exist.

**Tribal and Sub-Tribal Units.** The tribal framework contained two kinds of sub-tribal units (Josh. 7:13-14). This subdivision may also be schematic to some extent, as may be deduced from the variety of terms used to designate these subunits. It is, however, evident that the smallest unit was the household (*bet-ha-'av*), consisting of the sons of one father, with their wives and offspring. Several households made up a clan (*mishpahah*; Num. 2:34), which produced the military unit called "*elef*" (Judg. 6:15; I Sam. 17:18 and 22:7 et al.). The tribe consisted of several such clans. One tribe, Dan, supposedly consisted of a single clan. The "nuclear family," with which we are familiar nowadays, had no independent existence in those days, but was only a component of the larger household. The individual male enjoyed equality under the law and by tradition, but not within the family structure. The individual could participate in the large gatherings of his unit, which in turn gave him a voice in tribal and clan decisions, including the selection of tribal institution leaders.

**Institutions.** Tribal leadership and institutions arose from among the elders, as the heads of clans and households were known. They wielded political and judicial authority. This was a leadership elected by the units on the basis of lineage, experience, and wisdom, as well as the size of the bloc which supported the person in question. It is difficult to determine to what extent this representative and governing body known as the elders had a consistent nature and whether it had exclusive power in the spheres of its authority. It seems likely that it was not a rigidly consistent institution, in view of the variety of terms applied to various leaders who may or may not have been elders—*nagid* (I Sam. 9:16); *nadiv* (Num. 21:18; I Sam. 2:8 et al.); *hozeq*, *mehozeq* (Judg. 5:9, 14); and *qazin* (Judg. 11:11). There was moreover a term which was applied to a more identifiable kind of leader—*shofet moshif'a*, literally, a "savior judge." These were temporary leaders who emerged in times of crisis to save the tribe from its enemies, and their authority was charismatic and outside the traditional leadership. It is, nonetheless, apparent that the term judge was frequently applied to important individuals whose authority derived from their lineage and property, and who were thus similar to the traditional elders. The so-called "minor judges" (Judg. 10:1-4 and 12:8-15) belonged to this category. It is not entirely clear what was the highest rank in the tribal hierarchy. Certain biblical texts suggest that the term *nasi* designated this highest authority. It seems likely that the *nasi* was elected from among the elders (Num. 1:44 and 2:7).

**Social Changes among the Settlers.** The transition from a nomadic or seminomadic existence to a settled way of life affected the tribal society. While the tribal structure with its subunits remained unaltered, it was adapted to the new circumstances and needs, so that institutions and functions