

## Chronology of 1 & 2 Kings

First and Second Kings contain lots of chronological data. The author provides the length of the reign of each king. For the period of the divided kingdom, he also synchronizes the beginning of the reign of each king with the years of the king who rules the other kingdom. In addition, he often mentions a king's age at the time of his accession to the throne.

By combining biblical data with data from Assyrian chronological records, Bible scholars have arrived at two fixed dates: 853 BC was the year of Ahab's death (1 Kings 22:29–38), and 841 BC was the year Jehu began to reign (2 Kings 9:13). They have also arrived at the years in which Ahab and Jehu had contacts with Shalmaneser III of Assyria. With these fixed points, they have been able to work both forward and backward in the lines of the kings of Israel and Judah and reached dates for each king. The division of the kingdom occurred in 930 BC, Samaria fell to the Assyrians in 722–721 BC, and Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in 586 BC.

The data correlating the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah present some complicated problems. Most of the problems have, however, been resolved in a satisfactory way through recognizing such possibilities as overlapping reigns, co-regencies of sons with their fathers, differences in the time of the year in which a reign officially began, and differences in the way a king's first year was calculated.

970 BC	End of David's reign and Solomon becomes king (2 Sam 5:4–5; 1 Kings 2:10–11).
930 BC	Solomon's reign ends (1 Kings 11:42–43) and the kingdom is divided.
930–913 BC	Solomon's son Rehoboam rules over the southern kingdom, Judah (1 Kings 12:1–24; 14:21–31).
930–909 BC	Jeroboam I (Solomon's official) reigns over the northern kingdom, Israel (1 Kings 12:25–14:20). He becomes the archetype for all the evil kings of Israel.
870–850 BC	Approximate time of Elijah's ministry in the northern kingdom (1 Kings 17–19; 21; 2 Kings 1–2)
850–795 BC	Approximate time of Elisha's ministry in the northern kingdom (1 Kings 19; 2 Kings 2–8; 9:1; 13:14–21)
722–721 BC	King Shalmaneser V and king Sargon II of Assyria conquer Samaria during the rule of king Hoshea of the northern kingdom (2 Kings 17:3–24).
715–686 BC	Hezekiah rules Judah (2 Kings 18:1–20:21).
701 BC	King Sennacherib of Assyria occupies Judah and threatens Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:13–37).
640–609 BC	Josiah rules Judah and renews the covenant in 622 BC (2 Kings 22:1–23:30).
598–597 BC	Jerusalem surrenders to king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. King Jehoiachin is taken captive to Babylon. His uncle Zedekiah is made king (2 Kings 23:36–24:20).
586 BC	Nebuchadnezzar occupies Jerusalem. King Zedekiah is captured, blinded and taken to Babylon. The temple and the city are destroyed. The people of Judah are taken into captivity in Babylon (2 Kings 25:1–21).
562 BC	Jehoiachin is released from prison but stays in Babylon (2 Kings 25:27–30).

## **Kings of Assyria during the time of Kings**

745–727 BC	Reign of Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Kings 15:29; 16:7, 10; 1 Chron 5:6; 2 Chron 28:20; he also called Pul in the Old Testament, 2 Kings 15:19; 1 Chron 5:26)
727–722 BC	Reign of Shalmaneser V, son of Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings 17:3–5; 18:9–11).
721–705 BC	Reign of Sargon II, possibly brother of Shalmaneser (Is 20:1; see also 2 Kings 17:6). He and his son Sennacherib conquered Samaria and brought captives from Samaria to Assyria.
705–681 BC	Reign of Sennacherib, son of Sargon (mentioned several times in connection with his attack on Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah and the ministry of Isaiah, 2 Kings 18:13–19:36; 2 Chron chapter 32; Is 36:1; chapter 37). He was murdered by two of his sons.
681–669 BC	Reign of Esarhaddon, younger son of Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:37; Is 37:38). He brought more captives from Samaria to Assyria (Ezra 4:2).
669–627 BC	Reign of Ashurbanipal, son of Esarhaddon (Ezra 4:10).

## **Kings of Babylonia during the time of Kings**

626–605 BC	Reign of Nabopolassar, the founder of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. He is not mentioned by name, but referred to in 2 Kings 23:29 and 2 Chron 35:20–27.
605–562 BC	Reign of Nebuchadnezzar. He carried away Judah in the seventy-year of captivity in Babylonian. He is mentioned many times in the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and in the later chapters of Kings and Chronicles.
556–539 BC	Reign of Nabonidus, the last king of Babylonian Empire. He is not mentioned in the Old Testament.
553?–539 BC	Belshazzar, son of Nabonidus, reigned together with his father (Dan chapter 5, 7:1; 8:1).