SECOND KINGS

Chapter 15

***Azariah King of Judah***

**In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah began to reign. 2 He was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-two years. His mother’s name was Jecoliah; she was from Jerusalem. 3 He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father Amaziah had done. 4 The high places, however, were not removed; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there. 5 The Lord afflicted the king with leprosy until the day he died, and he lived in a separate house. Jotham the king’s son had charge of the palace and governed the people of the land. 6 As for the other events of Azariah’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? 7 Azariah rested with his fathers and was buried near them in the City of David. And Jotham his son succeeded him as king.**

**15:1** *twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam.* 767 b.c., based on dating the beginning of Jeroboam’s co-regency with Jehoash in 793 (see note on 14:23). (CSB)

 *Azariah … began to reign.* He began his sole reign, after a 24-year co-regency with his father Amaziah (see notes on v. 2; 14:2, 21). (His actual years were one less than his official years.) (CSB)

**15:2** *fifty-two years.* 792–740 b.c. (but he was co-regent with his father Amaziah 792–767). See note on v. 1. (CSB)

**15:3** *as his father Amaziah had done.* See note on 14:3. (CSB)

**15:4** *high places, however, were not removed.* See 14:4; see also note on 1Ki 15:14. (CSB)

**15:5** *afflicted the king with leprosy.* A punishment for usurping the priestly function of burning incense on the altar in the temple (see 2Ch 26:16–21; cf. Lev 13:46). (CSB)

 *had charge of the palace and governed the people of the land.* Jotham ruled for his father for the remainder of Azariah’s life (750–740 b.c.; see note on v. 33). (CSB)

**15:6** *all he did.* A more detailed account of Azariah’s accomplishments is found in 2Ch 26:1–15. (CSB)

 *annals of the kings of Judah.* See note on 1Ki 14:29. (CSB)

**15:7** *rested with his fathers.* See note on 1Ki 1:21. (CSB)

 *Jotham his son succeeded him.* For the reign of Jotham see vv. 32–38. (CSB)

***Zechariah King of Israel***

**8 In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned six months. 9 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, as his fathers had done. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit. 10 Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against Zechariah. He attacked him in front of the people, assassinated him and succeeded him as king. 11 The other events of Zechariah’s reign are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel. 12 So the word of the Lord spoken to Jehu was fulfilled: “Your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation.”**

**15:8** *thirty-eighth year of Azariah.* 753 b.c. (see note on v. 2). (CSB)

**15:9** *sins of Jeroboam.* See 1Ki 12:26–32; 13:33–34; 14:16. (CSB)

**15:11** *annals of the kings of Israel.* See note on 1Ki 14:19. (CSB)

**15:12** *word of the Lord… was fulfilled.* See NIV text note. With the downfall of Jehu’s dynasty, the northern kingdom entered a period of political instability (see Hos 1:4). The remaining five kings of the northern kingdom were all assassinated with the exception of Menahem, who reigned ten years, and Hoshea, who was imprisoned by the Assyrians. From the strength and wealth of the reign of Jeroboam II, the decline and fall of the northern kingdom was swift. (CSB)

***Shallum King of Israel***

**13 Shallum son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah, and he reigned in Samaria one month. 14 Then Menahem son of Gadi went from Tirzah up to Samaria. He attacked Shallum son of Jabesh in Samaria, assassinated him and succeeded him as king. 15 The other events of Shallum’s reign, and the conspiracy he led, are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel. 16 At that time Menahem, starting out from Tirzah, attacked Tiphsah and everyone in the city and its vicinity, because they refused to open their gates. He sacked Tiphsah and ripped open all the pregnant women.**

**15:13** *thirty-ninth year of Uzziah.* 752 b.c. (see note on v. 2). Uzziah is another name for Azariah (see NIV text note on 14:21). (CSB)

**15:14** *Menahem … went from Tirzah up to Samaria.* It is likely that Menahem was the commander of a military garrison at Tirzah, the former capital of the northern kingdom (see 1Ki 14:17; 15:21, 33). (CSB)

 *succeeded him.* For the reign of Menahem see vv. 17–22. (CSB)

**15:15** *annals of the kings of Israel.* See note on 1Ki 14:19. (CSB)

**15:16** *Tiphsah.* There was a Tiphsah located far to the north of Hamath (see 14:25) on the Euphrates River (see 1Ki 4:24). It is unlikely that this was the city intended. Some interpreters prefer the reading “Tappuah” of the Septuagint. Tappuah was a city on the border between Ephraim and Manasseh (Jos 16:8; 17:7–8). Perhaps there was a Tiphsah in Israel not otherwise mentioned. (CSB)

 *ripped open all the pregnant women.* See 8:12 and note. (CSB)

***Menahem King of Israel***

**17 In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria ten years. 18 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord. During his entire reign he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit. 19 Then Pul king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem gave him a thousand talents of silver to gain his support and strengthen his own hold on the kingdom. 20 Menahem exacted this money from Israel. Every wealthy man had to contribute fifty shekels of silver to be given to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria withdrew and stayed in the land no longer. 21 As for the other events of Menahem’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel? 22 Menahem rested with his fathers. And Pekahiah his son succeeded him as king.**

**15:17** *thirty-ninth year of Azariah.* 752 b.c. (see note on v. 2). (CSB)

 *ten years.* 752–742. (CSB)

**15:18** *sins of Jeroboam.* See 1Ki 12:26–32; 13:33–34; 14:16.

**15:19** *Pul.* The Babylonian name (see 1Ch 5:26) of the Assyrian ruler Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 b.c.; see NIV text note). (CSB)

 *invaded the land.* Assyrian annals of Tiglath-Pileser III indicate that he marched west with his army in 743 and took tribute from, among others, Carchemish, Hamath, Tyre, Byblos, Damascus, and Menahem of Samaria (see map No. 6 at the end of the Study Bible). (CSB)

 *thousand talents.* See NIV text note. This was an enormous sum of money. For the relative value of a talent of silver see note on 5:5. (CSB)

 *gain his support and strengthen his own hold.* It appears that as a usurper Menahem still felt insecure on the throne. The opposition to his rule may have come from those following the leadership of Pekah, who favored an alliance with the Arameans of Damascus in order to resist the Assyrian threat (see note on v. 27). Hosea denounced the policy of seeking aid from the Assyrians and predicted that it would fail (Hos 5:13–15). (CSB)

**15:20** *fifty shekels.* See NIV text note. A simple calculation reveals that it would require approximately 60,000 men of means to provide the 1,000 talents of tribute. This gives some indication of the prosperity the northern kingdom had enjoyed during the time of Jeroboam II. (CSB)

**15:21** *annals of the kings of Israel.* See note on 1Ki 14:19. (CSB)

 *years.* 742–740. (CSB)

***Pekahiah King of Israel***

**23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned two years. 24 Pekahiah did evil in the eyes of the Lord. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit. 25 One of his chief officers, Pekah son of Remaliah, conspired against him. Taking fifty men of Gilead with him, he assassinated Pekahiah, along with Argob and Arieh, in the citadel of the royal palace at Samaria. So Pekah killed Pekahiah and succeeded him as king. 26 The other events of Pekahiah’s reign, and all he did, are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel.**

**15:23** *fiftieth year of Azariah.* 742 b.c. (see note on v. 2). (CSB)

 *two years.* 742–740. (CSB)

**15:24** *sins of Jeroboam.* See 1Ki 12:26–32; 13:33–34; 14:16. (CSB)

**15:25** *One of his chief officers.* Pekah was probably the ranking official in the Transjordan provinces, but his allegiance to Menahem and Pekahiah may well have been more apparent than real (see note on v. 27). (CSB)

 *conspired against him.* Differences over foreign policy probably played an important role in fomenting Pekah’s revolution. Pekahiah undoubtedly followed the policy of his father Menahem in seeking Assyria’s friendship (see v. 20). Pekah advocated friendly relations with the Arameans of Damascus in order to counter potential Assyrian aggression (see 16:1–9; Isa 7:1–2, 4–6). (CSB)

**15:26** *annals of the kings of Israel.* See note on 1Ki 14:19. (CSB)

***Pekah King of Israel***

**27 In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned twenty years. 28 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit. 29 In the time of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel Beth Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh and Hazor. He took Gilead and Galilee, including all the land of Naphtali, and deported the people to Assyria. 30 Then Hoshea son of Elah conspired against Pekah son of Remaliah. He attacked and assassinated him, and then succeeded him as king in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah. 31 As for the other events of Pekah’s reign, and all he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel?**

**15:27** *fifty-second year of Azariah.* 740 b.c. (see note on v. 2). (CSB)

 *twenty years.* 752–732, based on the assumptions (which the data seem to require) that Pekah had established in Transjordan virtually a rival government to that of Menahem when Menahem assassinated Shallum (see notes on vv. 17, 19, 25), and that the number of regnal years given here includes this period of rival rule. (CSB)

**15:28** *sins of Jeroboam.* See 1Ki 12:26–32; 13:33–34; 14:16. (CSB)

**15:29** *Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came.* See note on v. 19. The historical background for this attack is found in 16:5–9; 2Ch 28:16–21; Isa 7:1–17. (CSB)

 *Ijon … Naphtali.* Over 150 years earlier Ben-Hadad I of Damascus had taken this same territory from the northern kingdom in response to an appeal by a king of Judah (see notes on 1Ki 15:19–20). (CSB)

 *deported the people to Assyria.* See 1Ch 5:26. The forced exile of Israelites from their homeland was a fulfillment of the covenant curse (see note on 10:32). (CSB)

**15:30** *Hoshea … conspired against Pekah.* Hoshea probably represented the faction in the northern kingdom that favored cooperation with Assyria rather than resistance. In one of his annals Tiglath-Pileser III claims to have placed Hoshea on the throne of the northern kingdom and to have taken ten talents of gold and 1,000 talents of silver as tribute from him. (CSB)

 *twentieth year of Jotham.* 732 b.c. (see notes on vv. 32–33). Reference is to his 20th official year, which was his 19th actual year. (CSB)

**15:31** *annals of the kings of Israel.* See note on 1Ki 14:19. (CSB)

***Jotham King of Judah***

**32 In the second year of Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, Jotham son of Uzziah king of Judah began to reign. 33 He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem sixteen years. His mother’s name was Jerusha daughter of Zadok. 34 He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father Uzziah had done. 35 The high places, however, were not removed; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there. Jotham rebuilt the Upper Gate of the temple of the Lord. 36 As for the other events of Jotham’s reign, and what he did, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? 37 (In those days the Lord began to send Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah against Judah.) 38 Jotham rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the City of David, the city of his father. And Ahaz his son succeeded him as king.**

**15:32** *second year of Pekah.* 750 b.c. (see note on v. 27). (CSB)

**15:33** *sixteen years.* 750–735 b.c. Jotham was co-regent with his father 750–740 (see note on v. 5). Jotham’s reign was in some sense terminated in 735, and his son Ahaz took over. However, Jotham continued to live until at least 732 (see notes on vv. 30, 37). (CSB)

**15:34** *as his father Uzziah had done.* See note on v. 3; see also 2Ch 27:2. (CSB)

**15:35** *high places, however, were not removed.* See v. 4; see also note on 1Ki 15:14. (CSB)

 *Upper Gate of the temple.* See 2Ch 23:20; Jer 20:2; Eze 8:3; 9:2. Additional information on Jotham’s building activities is given in 2Ch 27:3–4. (CSB)

**15:36** *other events of Jotham’s reign.* See 2Ch 27:1–6. (CSB)

 *annals of the kings of Judah.* See note on 1Ki 14:29. (CSB)

**15:37** This parenthetical statement concerning Jotham’s reign supports the idea of an overlap between the reigns of Jotham and Ahaz (see note on v. 33), since 16:5–12; 2Ch 28:5–21; Isa 7:1–17 all place the major effort of Rezin and Pekah in the time of Ahaz. (CSB)

**15:38** *rested with his fathers.* See note on 1Ki 1:21. (CSB)