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Dear Associates and Friends,

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Continuing the saga of the divided ancient Israelite kingdoms is the topic of the article for this month, "[Israel and Judah: 25. Jehoshaphat and Other Kings](#)." Kings, prophets, rebellion, and wars are a continuing theme. Rulers disobey God, and the people suffer. When the people disobey, the nation receives God's punishments and eventually disaster and exile — but that is in the future for both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Cast of Characters:

1. King Jehoshaphat is still the good ruler, faithful to YHWH. He works hard to remove idolatry from his kingdom, teach his people about the Law of God, and establish religious and secular courts.
2. Armies of Ammon, Moab, and a third minor regional power try to invade Judah.
3. The army and all the people of Judah rally to their king, and call upon YHWH to protect His chosen people.
4. King Ahaziah of Israel, heir to the throne, is not quite as evil as his father Ahab or his mother Jezebel, but he has a humpty-dumpty moment and does not reign long. By the way, you don't want to be in his army. Bad things happen.
5. The prophet Elijah (his name means "God is YHWH) puts in two appearances before leaving the stage in glory. Don't get on Elijah's bad side. If you do, bring your asbestos umbrella.
6. The prophet Elisha (his name means "God saves" or "God is savior"), travels with Elijah to the site of his "flight" departure, and begins his solo prophetic ministry to stem the tide of evil in Israel.
7. Mesha, the very evil king of Moab revolts against his overlord Ahaziah of Israel, loses disastrous battles, yet he ends up repelling an invasion. (You don't want to be his son.) To top it all off, Mesha claims victory, carved in stone.

Such are the characters of this month's article. Now let's examine those lovely people, the Moabites.

Mesha of Moab and Jeroboam of Israel, Two Sides of the Same Coin

The Moabites descended from Abraham's nephew Lot (Genesis 19:30–38). After surviving the destruction of Sodom with his daughters, he had sex with his daughters (they thought the world had ended, verse 31) and the Moabites and Ammonites began. Lot was called "just" and "righteous" (the same Greek word, KJV) in 2 Peter 2:7–8. YHWH had Israel pass through Moab without harming them (Deuteronomy 2:8–9). The Israelites even destroyed the Amorite kingdom that was suppressing Moab.

"Woe to you, Moab! You have perished, people of Chemosh! He gave up his sons delivered from slaughter, And his daughters into captivity To Sihon, king of the Amorite."

• **Numbers 21:29**

King Balak of Moab conspired with the pagan prophet Balaam and the Midianites to destroy Israel. They tried seduction by using their daughters as prostitutes and seducing Israelite men to worship Chemosh (the

Israelite men were prone to such things, Numbers chapter 25). Balak and Balaam succeeded to a limited extent, but the Israelite idolaters and adulterers were all put to death.

Jeroboam, first King of Israel in the north, created sanctuaries for pagan gods at Bethel:

“So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold and said to the people. It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your elohim, Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt. And he placed the one in Bethel and the other he set up in Dan.”

• **1 Kings 12:28–29**

Note the comparison that Jeremiah made some 170± years later after Jeroboam:

“Then Moab will be ashamed because of Chemosh, Just as the house of Israel was ashamed because of Bethel, their trust.”

• **Jeremiah 48:13**

All of Jeremiah chapter 48 is about the future judgment on Moab because of all the horrible things they have done in ancient times to Israel, Judah, and in future times before Christ returns. Some of the specific prophecies of Jeremiah chapter 48 have not yet been fulfilled. One particular reason Moab is to be punished by YHWH (as Jeremiah wrote) was that Moab encouraged Judah to revolt against Nebuchadnezzar, and then (threatened by the might of the Babylonian King) turned around and helped plunder Judah when that kingdom was destroyed. Nice. Such are the people we encounter in this month’s article.

Why does God allow such people to continue for so long? Some eventually are judged permanently like the Aztec culture. It was wiped out by the Spanish and other tribes in Mexico who hated the Aztecs. They had a great flourishing culture, but it was based on blood and gore.

Even the most evil of people will be saved by Christ — eventually — yes, the absolutely worst people you can imagine. Even me, even you. We learn from negative examples as well as positive examples in Scripture. We all strive to live a life with minimal pain, avoiding bad things and acts, as we strive to love God and love people. We all fall short. Christ lifts us all up, because He was lifted up and crucified for us.

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Thank You

We at ASK try to lift you up as you help us continue month to month, year by year, to edit, write, and produce useful and solid teaching from the Scripture. We strive to improve material already published and online, making changes when necessary. The other day I spent a great deal of time clarifying the article “[The Story of Creation](#).” The changes made the creation narratives in Genesis and elsewhere in Scripture more understandable to me and to the next readers. Thank you for making that possible.

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