

The Kings, Prophets and Priests of Judah

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

Ahitub = a priest in the line of Eleazar
Ahitub = a priest whose exact lineage is unknown

Ahitub = a priest in the line of Ithamar
 Much of the focus is upon the priestly succession.

Not all men named in the priest column are high priests.
 The numbering below (like Amariah 1) is not done in the Bible. This simply allows us to keep separate men who have the same name.
 The Scripture listings are not necessarily exhaustive; they simply will make the lineage clear.
 *In a priestly line, but not mentioned in connection with any particular king or historical incident.
 **Probably not a high priest.

Leaders (reigns B.C.)	Prophets	(High) Priests (Political Heads)	Scripture on Priests and Kings
Moses		Aaron	Ex. 27:21 28:1
Joshua		Eleazar (Moses) & Ithamar	Ex. 6:25 28:1 Lev. 12:10
Various Judges		Phinehas (Moses & Joshua & Judges ¹)	Num. 3:4 7:8 20:26 1Chron. 6:3 Ex. 6:25 Num. 25:7, 11 Joshua 22:30–32 Judges 20:28
Probably various judges		Abishua* Bukki *, Uzzi (or, Ozi)* Zerahiah*, Meraioth*`	1Chron. 6:4 1Chron. 6:5 1Chron. 6:6 Keil and Delitzsch: most of these men are not High Priests ²

¹ Since Phinehas is alive during the time of Moses and Joshua, this suggests that Judges 20 is not listed in chronological order, given that the period of the Judges would exceed the life of nearly any individual.

² Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 2, p. 446. This is in connection with one particular scenario which they suggest—that the Tent of Worship was moved to Gibeon because of Saul’s attack on Nob.

Leaders (reigns B.C.)	Prophets	(High) Priests (Political Heads)	Scripture on Priests and Kings
	A man of God speaks to Eli, which begins the subtle handoff from the priest to the prophet (1Sam. 2:27).	Eli Hophni & Phinehas 2*	1Sam. 1–4 1Sam. 1:3 4:19

As with Eli above, sometimes the Bible just begins with a man; but without much background on him.

During this time, the Ark of God will be taken into battle and then captured by the Philistines (1Sam. 4–5). This Ark causes the Philistines a great deal of grief and they return this to the Israelites (1Sam. 6–7). However, after this point, the Ark is never returned to the Tent of Meeting (the Tabernacle). See the **Movement of the Tabernacle and Ark** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). This is relevant because the priests were in charge of the Tabernacle, which included the Ark of God.

Kings (reigns B.C.)	Prophets	(High) Priests (Political Heads)	Scripture on Priests and Kings
		Amariah 1*, Ahitub 1E*	2Sam. 8:17 1Chron. 6:7–8 18:16 This two men were probably alive during the time of Saul. Ahitub is the father of Zadok 1.
Saul (1050–1011)	Samuel is both a priest and a prophet of God.	Samuel (Saul) Ahitub 1I and Ichabod* both sons of Phinehas 2 Eleazar ben Abinadab Ahijah ben Ahitub 1I Ahimelech 1 ben Ahitub 1I	1Sam. 1–16 (Samuel is a priest, judge and prophet in the line of Levi, but probably not in Aaron's line) 1Sam. 4:19–22 14:3 (probably not ever priests) 22:11 1Sam. 7:1 (consecrated as a priest and put in charge of the Ark) 1Sam. 14:3 (possibly the same person) 1Sam. 22:11 Abiathar is the son of Ahimelech 1

Ahitub 1E is the first named Ahitub in the line of Eleazar.

[Ahitub 1I](#) is the first named Ahitub in the line of [Ithamar](#).

It is likely that the city of Shiloh (where Eli served as a priest) had been destroyed by this time and that, even though we have the continuing line of priests, their function did not conform precisely to that described in the Law of God.

Saul will kill off a city of priests in Nob, leaving only [Abiathar](#) alive, who is apparently in the line of [Ithamar](#). While he is alive and living with David in exile, another set of priests will apparently arise. Although it is not completely clear how all of this took place, there would have been priests in charge of the Tabernacle after Saul had all of the priests killed in Nob.

Kings (reigns B.C.)	Prophets	(High) Priests (Political Heads)	Scripture on Priests and Kings
David (1011–971)	Nathan (2Sam. 7:2 12:25) Gad (1Sam. 22:5 2Sam. 24:11)	Abiathar (Saul, David and Solomon) Ahimelech 2 ³ (David) Zadok 1 (David) (Solomon)	1Sam. 22:17–21 2Sam. 8:17 1Kings 2:26–27 2Sam. 8:17 1Chron. 18:16 24:3, 6, 31 1Chron. 16:39 24:3 2Sam. 8:17 15:24–29, 36 17:17–20 19:11–14
<p>Interestingly enough, early in David’s reign, Abiathar’s son, Ahimelech 2 will become the High Priest in that line. 2Sam. 8:17a Zadok the son of Ahitub and Ahimelech (2) the son of Abiathar were priests. (ESV) See also 1Chron. 18:16.</p>			
<p>However, Zadok and Abiathar are called priests in Jerusalem by David in 2Sam. 15:11, 35; but Zadok and his brothers are also priests in Gibeon, where the Tabernacle is (1Chron. 16:39). So, for whatever reason, both Abiathar and Zadok are priests in Jerusalem; Zadok is sometimes a priest in Gibeon; and Ahimelech 2 is possibly a priest in Gibeon (with the Tabernacle).</p>			
<p>David will move the Ark to Jerusalem during his reign (1Sam. 7:1–2 2Sam. 6 1Chron. 15:1–3, 12 16:1, 37 1Chron. 15:26) and Abiathar and Zadok will come up for its being moved (2Sam. 15:24, 29). However, the Tabernacle will apparently remain in Gibeon during this time (1Chron. 16:37, 39–40). Logically, there would have been some priests in charge of the Tabernacle and another set of priests in charge of the Ark of God, which was in Jerusalem, in a Tent that King David had made.</p>			
<p>Why David didn’t unite the Ark and the Tabernacle of God? (1) No prophet or priest came to David telling him to do this; and (2) David had in his mind very early on to build a House for God—a permanent structure (2Sam. 7). God told Nathan that David would not build the Temple but that Solomon would. When the Temple is built, obviously, the Ark would be placed inside of it.</p>			
<p>Ahimelech (Abiathar’s son) is tied to the sons of Ithamar and Zadok to the sons of Eleazar in 1Chron. 24:3.</p>			
<p>Tying Eli to Ithamar. There are two sets of priests noted in 1Chron. 24:3: the sons of Eleazar under Zadok¹ and the sons of Ithamar under Ahimelech ben Abiathar, all during the time of King David (1Chron. 24:31). Logically, because all of the priests of Nob were killed except for Abiathar, this would be the Abiathar that we know from 1 & 2Samuel, and Ahimelech² would be his son (logically, named for his grandfather, who was killed at Nob—1Sam. 30:7). Jonathan would be another son of Abiathar’s (2Sam. 15:36 17:15–17 1Kings 1:42).</p>			
<p>The end of Abiathar as High Priest and the recognition of Zadok as High Priest is said to be the fulfillment of a prophecy against the line of Eli. 1Sam. 2:31–35 3:11–14 2Sam. 20:25 1Kings 2:27, 35</p>			
Solomon (971–931)	Nathan (1Kings 1:8, 22–23, 32, 45)	Zadok 1 (Solomon) Ahimaaz** ben Zadok Azariah 1 ben Zadok Johanan* ** Azariah 2	1Kings 1:44–45 2:35 1Chron. 29:22 2Sam. 15:36 18:22, 27 1Chron. 6:8 1Kings 4:2 1Chron. 6:9 1Chron. 6:10 (see discussion in 1Chron. 6:5–9, 6:10)
<p>Although we have the Tabernacle of God mentioned during the reign of Solomon, it is not mentioned during the reigns of Saul and David (see the exegesis of 1Sam. 7:1–2 for more information on this).</p>			

³ Do not be concerned that we have a father and son serving both David and Solomon. We should be more concerned if such a thing did not occur occasionally.

Kings (reigns B.C.)	Prophets	(High) Priests (Political Heads)	Scripture on Priests and Kings
Zadok begins as a priest under Solomon, but he is an older man. Azariah 1 (Zadok's son) serves as priest under Solomon (1Kings 4:2). Azariah 2 is Zadok's great grandson who serves in the Temple of Solomon (1Chron. 6:10).			

In this chart, I am mostly focusing upon the priests and their line of succession. I will have to do another chart with the parallel kingdoms (Judah and Israel) and their parallel prophets.

Kings of Judah (reigns B.C.)	Prophets	(High) Priests (Political Heads)	Scripture on Priests and Kings
Rehoboam (931–913) Abijah (913–911) Asa (911–870)		He had no interest in a legitimate priest.	1Kings 12:28–30
Interestingly enough, the Bible follows the two kingdoms more than it appears to follow the priests.			
Jehoshaphat (870–848) (873–870) Jehoram (848–841) (853–848) Ahaziah (841) Athaliah (841–835) Joash (835–796) Amaziah (796–767)		Amariah 2 (Jehoshaphat) Ahitub 3* Jehoiada (Athaliah) (Joash) Zechariah (Joash) Zadok 2* Shallum*	2Chron. 19:1, 11 2Kings 11–12 2Chron. 23–24 2Chron. 24:20–22
Azariah (Uzziah) (767–740) Jotham (740–732) Ahaz (732–716) Hezekiah (716–687) Manasseh (687–642)	Amos (740) Micah (740) Hosea (760–710) Isaiah (740–680)	Azariah 2.5 (Uzziah) Urijah (Ahaz) Azariah 2.5 (Hezekiah)	2Chron. 26:16–21 2Kings 16:10–18 2Chron. 31:8–10
Amon (642–640) Josiah (640–608) Jehoahaz (608) Jehoakim (608–597) Jehoiachin (597) Zedekiah (597–586)	Nahum (666–615) Zephaniah (630–620) Habakkuk (627–586) Jeremiah (626–580)	Hilkiah (Josiah) Azariah 3* Seraiah (Zedekiah)	2Kings 22:4–14 23:4 2Chron. 34:9–22 2Kings 25:18–21 Jer. 52:24–27
The 70 year exile of Judah	Daniel (604–535) Ezekiel (593–570) Obadiah (585)	Ezra (Zerubbabel)	Ezra 2:2 7:1–6

Ahitub = a priest in the line of Eleazar

Ahitub = a priest in the line of Ithamar

Ahitub = a priest whose exact lineage is unknown

Governors of Judah (reigns B.C.)	Prophets	(High) Priests (Political Heads)	Scripture on Priests and Kings
Zerubbabel (535–515)	Haggai (520) Zechariah (520–518)	Jehozadak (Zerubbabel) Jeshua (Zerubbabel)	Ezra 3:2, 8–9 5:2 10:18 Neh. 12:26 Haggai 1:1, 12, 14 2:2, 3 Zech. 6:11
Nehemiah (445–410)	Malachi (450–400)	Joiakim (Nehemiah) Eliashib (Nehemiah)	Neh. 12:10, 12, 26 Neh. 3:1, 20–21 12:10 13:4–9

The mention of each priest does not mean that he was the High Priest. The lines given in Scripture are simply followed, and these would be the men mostly likely to be the High Priests. According to Josephus, Ozi was in the line of Eleazar and the High Priest until Eli, from the line of Ithamar (*Antiquities* v. 11, 5). There is indication as to why the priesthood changed lines (if, in fact, it did—Scripture appears to be in agreement).

The Scripture given under the heading *Scripture on Priests and Kings* is not meant to be exhaustive, but simply enough to indicate a connection between that particular priest and that particular king.

There is either another Meraioth who occurs between Ahitub 1 and Zadok 1, who is found only in 1Chron. 9 and Neh. 11, or those passages are more fluid in their genealogies, simply listing the first three men in those passages as sons of Ahitub 1 and of Meraioth.

~Not directly cited as the High Priest during the time of a particular king, but position can be inferred by context of passage cited.

[Return to Outline](#)

[Return to the Chart Index](#)