

## ROYAL ILLNESS AND KINGSHIP IDEOLOGY IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

In this book, Isabel Crazz offers the first systematic study of royal illness in the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. Applying a diachronic approach, she compares and contrasts how the different views concerning kingship and illness are developed in the larger trajectory of the Hebrew Bible. As such, she demonstrates how a framework of meaning is constructed around the motif of illness, which is expanded in several redactional steps. This development takes different forms and relates to issues such as problems with kingship, the cultic and moral conduct of individual kings, and the evaluation of dynasties. Significantly, Crazz shows how the scribes living in postmonarchic Judah expanded the interpretive framework of royal illness until it included a message of destruction and a critique of kingship. The physical and mental integrity of the king, therefore, becomes closely tied to his nation and the political system he represents.

Isabel Crazz is Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania. Her area of specialization is the Hebrew Bible in relation to its ancient Near Eastern contexts. She is the author of *Atonement and Purification: Priestly and Assyro-Babylonian Perspectives on Sin and Its Consequences* (2017).

## SOCIETY FOR OLD TESTAMENT STUDY

## MONOGRAPH SERIES

Series Editor: Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer

The SOTS monograph series seeks to showcase the best of modern biblical studies. All published books will have the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament as their focal point. There will also be scope for volumes that take an interdisciplinary approach, such as studies which look at the biblical texts from a comparative perspective, in dialogue with ancient Near Eastern studies or modern literary theory. Similarly, volumes which explore the reception history of a particular text or set of texts will be encouraged.

## Editorial Board:

John Goldingay, *Fuller Theological Seminary*

Anselm Hagedorn, *Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*

Charlotte Hempel, *University of Birmingham*

William Tooman, *University of St Andrews*

Rebecca Watson, *Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge*

Peter Williams, *Warden at Tyndale House*

## Recent titles in the series:

Marriage by Capture in the Book of Judges: An Anthropological Approach  
KATHERINE E. SOUTHWOOD

YHWH and Israel in the Book of Judges: An Object – Relations Analysis  
DERYN GUEST

Sennacherib's Campaign against Judah: A Source Analysis of Isaiah 36–37  
DAN'EL KAHN

Cognitive Science and Ancient Israelite Religion: New Perspectives on  
Texts, Artifacts, and Culture  
BRETT E. MAIDEN

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-83049-2 — Royal Illness and Kingship Ideology in the Hebrew Bible

Isabel Cranz

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

---

# Royal Illness and Kingship Ideology in the Hebrew Bible

ISABEL CRANZ

*University of Pennsylvania*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-83049-2 — Royal Illness and Kingship Ideology in the Hebrew Bible  
Isabel Cranz  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108830492](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108830492)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108907736

© Cambridge University Press 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Cranz, Isabel, 1980– author.

Title: Royal illness and kingship ideology in the Hebrew bible / Isabel Cranz,  
University of Pennsylvania.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY, USA : Cambridge  
University Press, 2020. | Series: Society for Old Testament study monographs |  
Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020016748 (print) | LCCN 2020016749 (ebook) | ISBN  
9781108830492 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108827331 (paperback) | ISBN  
9781108907736 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Kings and rulers—Biblical teaching. | Diseases—Biblical teaching. |  
Health—Biblical teaching. | Bible. Chronicles—Criticism, interpretation, etc. |  
Bible. Samuel—Criticism, interpretation, etc. | Bible. Kings—Criticism, interpretation, etc.

Classification: LCC BS1345.6.K5 C73 2020 (print) | LCC BS1345.6.K5 (ebook) |  
DDC 222/.06—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020016748>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020016749>

ISBN 978-1-108-83049-2 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Acknowledgments</i>	page vii
	<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	ix
	Introduction	1
PART I	THE FAILURE OF KINGSHIP AND THE DEMISE OF THE NATION: ILLNESS AS FRAME	
1	Royal Illness in Stories about the Early Monarchy	31
2	Royal Illness in the Story Cycles of Elijah and Elisha	60
3	The Illnesses of Abijah and Hezekiah in Light of Israelite and Judahite History	84
PART II	FLAWED PERSONALITIES AND DIVINE JUDGMENT: THE FRAMING OF ILLNESS IN THE BOOK OF CHRONICLES	
4	Jehoram Spills His Guts (Literally): The Embodiment of Retribution and the Davidic Covenant in 2 Chr 21	119
5	Royal Illness and Self-Reliance: King Asa	141
6	Royal Illness and Arrogance: Uzziah and Hezekiah	164
	Conclusion	187

*Contents*

<i>Bibliography</i>	191
<i>Subject Index</i>	221
<i>Source Index</i>	225
<i>Author Index</i>	231

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the summer of 2016, I presented a paper on King Asa's illness in the EABS unit titled "Medicine in Bible and Talmud." Little did I know that this paper would become a full-length study on royal illness in the Hebrew Bible. Yet, while teaching a class on the Book of Kings in the fall of 2016, the students alerted me to the fact that the Bible contains a fair number of sick kings. It is then that I realized that I had a potential book topic on my hands. Things went fairly quickly after that realization, mostly thanks to the generous support that was offered to me along the way.

I want to express my gratitude to Erin Guinn-Villareal, Andrew Knapp, Jeremy Schipper, and Steven Weitzman for reading chapters in progress and for providing honest and constructive feedback. Ehud Ben Zvi and the anonymous reviewers who reviewed the book for Cambridge University Press also kindly offered their advice on the completed manuscript, encouraging me to rethink and reshape my argument, and their advice and encouragement eventually led to a better book. Likewise, I am thankful for the opportunity to present my work at various forums, including the SBL 2018 Healthcare and Disability unit, the Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins (PSCO), the Columbia Study of the Hebrew Bible Seminar, the SBL 2019 Deuteronomistic History unit, the 2018 EABS Concepts of Leadership research group, and the NELC faculty colloquium. I would also like to thank the Penn Faculty Writing Retreat for helping me structure my summers, and the NELC Department at the University of Pennsylvania for granting me two semesters of leave during the 2017–2018 academic year.

As the project progressed, I was supported by Hsiao-wen Cheng, Jessie DeGrado, Janling Fu, Alison Joseph, Alice Mandell, Rebecca Scharbach Wollenberg, Malka Simkovitch, and Sarit Stern, who collaborated with me in developing various models of external accountability. Thanks also go to Blaise (Biagio) Tassone, Liz

### *Acknowledgments*

Lundberg, and T. J. Thames for helping me edit the manuscript in its various stages. Dan Ben Amos, Nili Gold, Mark Smith, and Jeff Tigay advised me when it came to composing the book proposal and searching for potential publishers. Parts of Chapter 5 come from my article “Advice for a Successful Doctor’s Visit: King Asa Meets Ben Sira” (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 80.2 (2018): 231–246). Parts of Chapter 6 contain sections from my article “The Motif of Uzziah’s צרעת in the Deuteronomistic History, Chronicles and Beyond” (*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 44.2 (2019): 233–249). I would like to express my thanks to these journals for allowing me to reprint the material. Similarly, I thank De Gruyter for allowing me to reprint parts of an article that is set to appear in the forthcoming edited volume *Transforming Authority: Concepts of Leadership in Prophetic and Chronistic Literature* (eds. Katharina Pyschny and Sarah Schulz; BZAW 518; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020). Finally, I want to express my gratitude to Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer for accepting the manuscript into the SOTS Monographs series as well as Eilidh Burrett and Beatrice Rehl for their technical support in preparing the manuscript for publication. All remaining mistakes are of course my own.

Special thanks go out to my parents, Annemarie and Donald. Over the years, they have offered their unwavering support and have always encouraged me to pursue my academic dreams. As the project neared its completion, they invited me frequently to spend the weekends at their house in New Jersey, where we drank tea and played Scrabble for the better part of the night. This book is dedicated to them.



## ABBREVIATIONS

AASF	Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae
AB	The Anchor Bible
ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
ABIB	Analecta Biblica
<i>ABR</i>	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
ACT	Acta theologica Danica
ADFU	Ausgrabungen der deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft Uruk Warka
<i>AfO</i>	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AfOBeih	Beihefte zum Archiv für Orientforschung
<i>AIL</i>	<i>Ancient Israel and its Literature</i>
<i>AJSL</i>	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i>
AMD	Ancient Magic and Divination
ANET	Ancient Near Eastern Texts
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
AS	Assyriological Studies
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
ATD	Altes Testament Deutsch
ATSAT	Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BBB	Bonner Biblische Beiträge
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Beiträge zur Kenntnis der babylonischen Religion</i>
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie

*List of Abbreviations*

<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
<i>BibOr</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar: Altes Testament. Edited by Martin Noth and Hans Walter Wolff
<i>BN</i>	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>BTS</i>	<i>Bible et terre sainte</i>
BR	Biblical Refigurations
BS	Biblical Seminar
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten (und Neuen) Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CABC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBC	Cornerstone Bible Commentary
CBOTS	Coniectanea Biblica Old Testament series
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
CM	Cuneiform Monographs
<i>CQR</i>	<i>Church Quarterly Review</i>
CSBS	Canadian Society for Biblical Studies
CSMS	The Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies
CTH	Catalogue des Textes <i>Hittites</i>
<i>DDD</i>	<i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible</i> , 2nd ed. Edited by Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst. Leiden: Brill, 1999.
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
EA	El Amarna
ECC	Eerdmans Critical Commentary
EDF	Erträge der Forschung
EHAT	Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament
EPRO	Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain
ESV	English Standard Version
<i>EvTh</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>

*List of Abbreviations*

FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>HALOT</i>	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Dictionary for the Old Testament</i> . Edited by Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Stamm. Leiden: Brill, 1994.
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HBS	Herders biblische Studien
<i>HeBAI</i>	<i>Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel</i>
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTKAT	Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
HTIBS	Historic Texts and Interpreters in Biblical Scholarship
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>ISBE</i>	<i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i>
<i>JAJ</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>
<i>JANER</i>	<i>Journal for Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCS</i>	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JPOS</i>	<i>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</i>
JPSTCS	Jewish Publication Society Torah Commentary Series
<i>JSJSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSQ</i>	<i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KJV	King James Version
LAOS	Leipziger altorientalistische Studien
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Studies

*List of Abbreviations*

MAOG	<i>Mitteilungen der Altorientalischen Gesellschaft</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
NCB	New Century Bible
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIV	New International Version
NJPS	New Jewish Publication Society of America Version
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OG	Old Greek
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
ORA	Orientalische Religionen in der Antike
OTE	<i>Old Testament Essays</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Old Testament Studies
OtSt	Oudtestamentische Studiën
RA	<i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
RINAP	The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period
RNBC	Readings: A New Bible Commentary
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAACT	State Archives of Assyria Cuneiform Texts
SAM	Studies in Ancient Medicine
SBB	Stuttgarter Biblische Beiträge
SBJT	<i>Southern Baptist Journal of Theology</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLAIL	Society of Biblical Literature Ancient Israel and its Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLWAW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings of the Ancient World
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
SBSI	Schriftenreihe zum Bayerischen Schulmuseum Ichenhause
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology

*List of Abbreviations*

ScrHier	Scripta Hierosolymitana
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SP	Studia Phoenicia
SSN	Studia Semitica Neerlandica
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
STR	Studies in Theology and Religion
TCS	Texts from Cuneiform Sources
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996.
<i>THLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literatur Zeitung</i>
<i>ThZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
ThSt	Theologische Studien
halotTOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
<i>Transeu</i>	<i>Transeuphratène</i>
<i>TRE</i>	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i> . Edited by G. Krause and G. Müller. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977–.
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TUAT	Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
UBCS	Understanding the Bible Commentary Series
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WANE	Worlds of the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZB	Zürcher Bibelkommentare