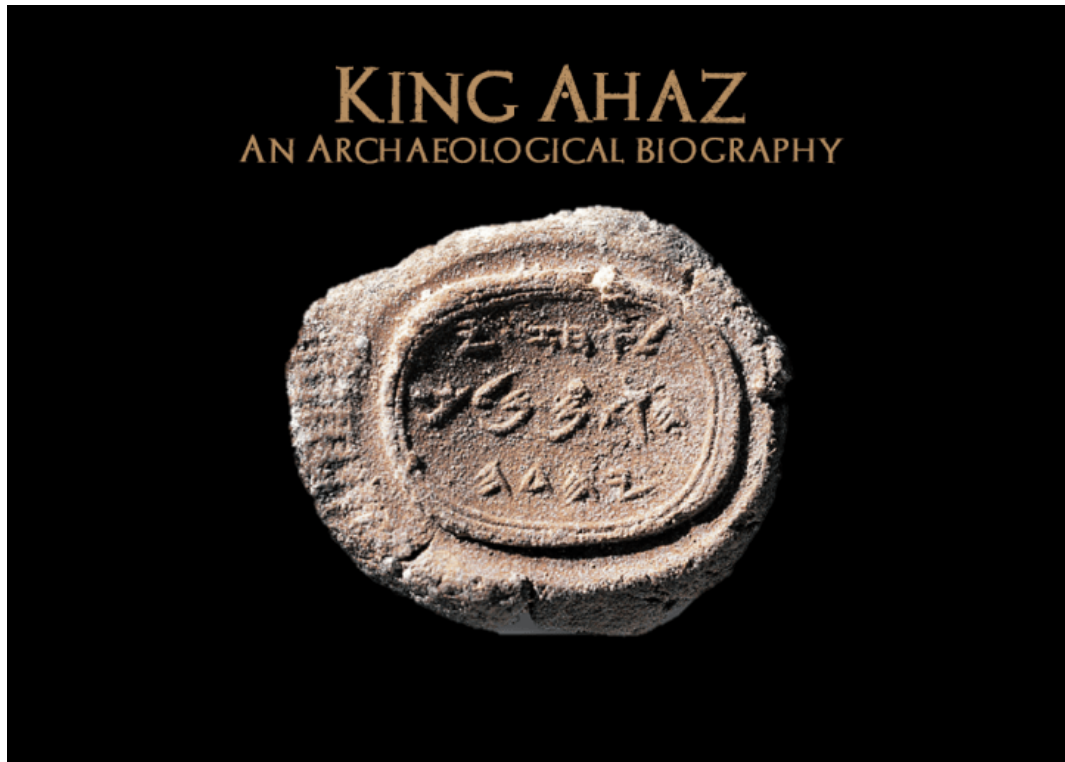




Critics have long doubted the Bible's historicity, but archaeology has authenticated the existence of many of the people, places, things and events in the Bible. Ahaz and Rezin have been authenticated as kings of Judah and Aram, or Syria,

“Ahaz . . . reigned in Jerusalem sixteen years”—2 Kings 16:2 NIV

He is remembered most for his war against Israel (under Pekah) and Aram (Syria) (under Rezin):

“Then Rezin king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel marched up to fight against Jerusalem and besieged Ahaz, but they could not overpower him”—2

Kings 16:5 NIV

Ahaz reached out to Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III when Pekah and Rezin tried to force him to join a coalition against Assyria:

“Ahaz sent messengers to say to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, ‘I am your servant and vassal. Come up and save me out of the hand of the king of Aram and of the king of Israel who are attacking me’—2 Kings 16:7 NIV

A number of inscriptions from this time period refer to the kings mentioned in the Bible:

Among the records of Tiglath-Pileser III is an entry claiming that he received tribute from **“Jehoahaz of Judah”** in 734 BCE. Jehoahaz, Ahaz’s full name, means “Yahweh has possessed.”

Ahaz’ name also appears on a seal and three bullae from Israel, all acquired from antiquities dealers.

The seal of an official during the reign of Ahaz carries the inscription **“Belonging to Usher, servant of Ahaz.”**

Two of the seal impressions, made from the same seal, read, **“Belonging to Hezekiah [son of Ahaz], king of Judah.”**

Ahaz’ personal seal was actually used to impress the third bullae with the legend **“Belonging to Ahaz [son of] Yehotam [Jothan], king of Judah.”**

Rezin, king of Aram, is named nine times in the Old Testament and six times in the surviving records of Tiglath-Pileser III. Sometime after that Rezin formed the anti-Assyrian coalition. Ahaz’ appeal to Tiglath-Pileser III for help was heeded:

“Ahaz also took what silver and gold was found in the Temple of Yahweh and in the palace treasury, and sent this as a present to the king of Assyria. The king of Assyria granted his request and, marching on Damascus, captured it; he deported its population to Kir and put Rezin to death”—2 Kings 16:8,9 NJB

According to Assyrian inscriptions Tiglath-Pileser III responded by laying siege to Damascus. Damascus was crushed, its citizens taken into captivity and Rezin killed, just as the Bible records at 2 Kings 16:9. This brought the kingdom of Aram to an end.

As another Bible writer, David, said, **“The spirit of Yahweh speaks through me, his word is on my tongue” (2 Samuel 23:2 NJB)**. Many of the people, places, things and events recorded in the Bible. However, Ahaz and Rezin have been authenticated, in sharp contrast to other religious books, such as the Book of Mormon, Doctrines and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, the Koran, etc.